REMARKS ON A TOUR

THROUGH THE DIFFERENT COUNTRIES OF

EUROPE, ASIA, AND AFRICA;

GIVING

A particular DESCRIPTION of the CHARACTERS, CUSTOMS, MANNERS and LAWS of each, with their natural and mechanical PRODUCTIONS.

The POLITICAL and COMMERCIAL INTERESTS of the ENGLISH EAST INDIA COMPANY are accurately delineated:

TOGETHER

With a propoſed and well digeſted SYSTEM, both for the IMPROVEMENT and better GOVERNMENT of THEIR POSSESSIONS in that Quarter.

A Work of this Kind becomes particularly intereſting to the Public, at a critical Moment, in which a late Governor of Bengal is called before the great Tribunal of the Britiſh Parliament, to anſwer various Charges of Miſconduct, founded in a great Meaſure on this authentic and inſtructive Narrative.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

DUBLIN:

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following Letters will be found to merit the Attention of the Public, as they contain the moſt authentic Information of the political Views of each Country, and ſeem indeed to have predicted the fatal Cataſtrophes in the Eaſt Indies, ariſing not only from the Want of a better eſtabliſhed Government, but alſo from the various Peculations and Miſconduct of the different Governors, who appear to have acted independent of any Inſtructions or Orders whatever.——The various Charges now exhibited againſt the late Governor-General of Bengal, are founded on Matters contained in theſe Letters, and claim Attention at this particular Criſis.

PREFACE.

THE Author of this work, though no candidate for literary fame, is induced, by the importunities of men diſtinguiſhed for public and private virtue, to deliver to the public the contents of a genuine correſpondence. His excurſions into foreign countries opened an immenſe field of obſervation, and ſometimes conducted him to ſources of intelligence, not often acceſſible to Europeans.

The love of novelty and variety is an univerſal paſſion; and an account of the policy and arts; the uſages, cuſtoms, and

manners of diſtant or unfrequented nations, if related with fidelity, though unadorned, muſt form at all times an intereſting narrative to the inquiſitive and the learned. But in the preſent period of extended intercourſe, when the rudeſt tribes of mankind may be brought to act in the general ſyſtem, the productions of every ſoil, the nature of every climate, the real character, abilities, and circumſtances of every people, command attention from ſtateſmen and legiſlators, and form a neceſſary branch in the ſcience of political œconomy. Commerce has become the great ſource of jealouſy and competition among the powers of Europe; and the rank of each in the political ſcale muſt be eſtimated by that ſtandard. Great Britain, by her commercial opulence and grandeur, no leſs than by the excellence of her civil conſtitution, has excited, for near a century, the admiration of the world. And if ſhe can no longer maintain her importance in that line, ſhe muſt reſign her pre-eminence among nations. But, while her dominion declines in one hemiſphere, it may flouriſh in the other; or ſhe may flouriſh in both as a commercial power, while ſhe contracts the limits of empire.

The

PREFACE.

The revolution in our American provinces, begun by the invidious exerciſe of power over a kindred people, and encouraged by the miſconduct of Britiſh Commanders in Chief, has preſented to rival powers a ſplendid object of ambition. But the reſources of the Britiſh government, in the commerce of the Eaſt, are certainly immenſe. And the arrangements of Aſiatic policy, now under the review of the legiſlature, if conducted by ſuperior wiſdom, may compenſate, in ſome degree, the calamities of an unfortunate war, and retrieve the glory of the Britiſh name.

If great Britain has ſoared to an envied heighth of grandeur, it was not by means of armies marching triumphantly over hoſtile countries. Her diſtant dependencies, the great ſource of her wealth and power, originated in a ſpirit of commerce and colonization. In the day of her adverſity, let this nation recur to thoſe maxims, which conducted her once to proſperity and glory. Greater renown, as well as greater advantage is to be acquired by retaining and improving, than by extending conqueſts.

The ſcene of theſe TRAVELS lies, for the moſt part, in thoſe countries of Aſia

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and Africa, whoſe trade, already ſo lucrative, might be rendered of ineſtimable importance to the revenue and wealth of Britain; nay, even the means of relieving the public from an incumbrance of debt, which muſt otherwiſe ſoon become inſupportable. The chief object of their publication is, to furniſh ſome hints for the eſtabliſhment of ſuch political arrangements in India, as may be equally conducive to the intereſts of that country and thoſe of England—To compoſe the diſtractions of the Mogul empire, by reſtoring the king of Delhi to his hereditary imperial throne; by forming an alliance between that prince and the Britiſh nation, on principles of mutual ſecurity and advantage; and by fixing the limits, and ſettling the claim of ſubordinate ſtates—To reſtore to deſerted lands their exiled inhabitants; to erect, among a much-injured people, the ſtandard of liberty and juſtice; whence improvements in agriculture, manufactures, and commerce, would flow of courſe: to raiſe the drooping ſpirits of the ſad ryot* and artiſan to confidence and hope; to reſcue millions of mankind from ſavage anarchy

* Huſbandman.

and

and oppreſſion; and to reſtore them to the enjoyment of property, liberty, and life.

The remarks of the Author on the genius of different nations in Aſia and Africa; on ſubjects of policy and commerce; on curioſities of art and nature; and in general, on whatever occurred as moſt entertaining or intereſting, while he ſojourned in thoſe diſtant quarters of the globe, form the moſt conſiderable part of the following correſpondence. But he has alſo had adventures nearer home, and theſe not a little diverſified. He has of late years been led frequently to viſit all the great commercial cities on the continent of Europe: and, if his communications with trading companies, or with men of rank and fortune, have ſometimes enabled him to look behind the ſcene in public buſineſs, theſe VOLUMES may not only ſerve to gratify, in ſome meaſure, a general curioſity, but may alſo ſuggeſt ſome uſeful hints to princes and ſtateſmen.

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TRAVELS

TRAVELS

IN

EUROPE, ASIA, and AFRICA.

LETTER I.

To R—— W——, Eſq; London.

Antwerp, 12th June, 1777.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

MY health, which has conſtantly been impaired by the air of London, has as conſtantly been reſtored by that of Holland: an effect, which I ſhould hardly have attributed to the climate or that country, but rather to my voyage thither, had not my experience been ſo deciſive. For, however ſingular it may appear, the feveriſh ſymptoms, that accompanied me from London, and diſappeared in Holland, returned, in all their malignity, in proportion as I removed from the moiſt and foggy atmoſphere of the United Provinces, and breathed the purer air of Brabant. I am now confined to this city by a ſtate of health ſo languid and precarious,

carious, that I know not when it may be practicable for me to purſue my journey. Yet, in ſuch a valetudinary ſituation, I feel ſenſible ſatisfaction, not only from the hoſpitality and kind attention of Governor Plunket and Mr. Hollier, but, if poſſible, ſtill more from that entertainment and inſtruction with which their converſation abounds.

By this time, it is probable, you begin to conſtrue my ſilence into neglect, or perhaps into a breach of poſitive engagement, ſince I led you to expect an early and regular correſpondence. But the mention of a few particulars will ſerve, I hope, to clear me from all imputations of that nature. Give me leave then to obſerve, that from Holland I had nothing new or intereſting to communicate to you, having formerly, both in letters and in converſation, exhauſted my remarks on that country. You will alſo obſerve, that, it being my original intention either to have returned to Britain, or to have proceeded to Paris, in the courſe of a few weeks; a correſpondence in theſe circumſtances, became leſs incumbent, or rather altogether unneceſſary.—And, not to trouble you with ſuperfluous vindication, my hours of leiſure have indeed been ſo fully engaged in reſearches into the trade of France, Holland, Denmark, and Portugal with the Eaſt Indies, that my other ideas were almoſt completely abſorbed in thoſe important objects of diſcuſſion.

But, having been detained here beyond my expectation, it is now full time to diſcharge the duty of friendſhip. And I gladly embrace, while yet

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yet in my power, an occaſion of cultivating that pleaſing intercourſe and exchange of ſentiments we have ſo often indulged, but which muſt ſoon ſuffer a long interruption by our reſpective deſtinations to different hemiſpheres. My reſidence here, though in other reſpects involuntary and reluctant, has indeed been attended with one advantage, which a traveller would be almoſt tempted to celebrate. It has furniſhed me with an opportunity of enquiring into the preſent ſtate of this antient city, once the emporium of Europe, and ſtill diſtinguiſhed by the wealth and wiſe œconomy of its inhabitants.

It is known to all Europe, that the commerce of Amſterdam was founded on the ruin of that of Antwerp. The policy of the Dutch operating on the neceſſities of Auſtria, and the unſuſpicious candour of England, formed and confirmed thoſe famous treaties whereby the empire yielded up the port and trade of this city a ſacrifice to the mercantile views of Holland.—The Scheld is navigable by ſhips of the largeſt burthen up to Antwerp: but two forts, on oppoſite ſides of that river, oppoſe the paſſage of veſſels above a limited burthen, which is very ſmall. A report, propagated by the cunning of the Dutch, that there are five large veſſels ſunk in the Scheld between theſe forts, has ſtrangely gained credit, not only in countries at a diſtance from that river, but in Brabant itſelf, and even in Antwerp. It is amuſing to reflect on the eaſy credulity of the world. How much are mankind impoſed on by vague reports, and the authority of univerſally-received opinions! I am well aſſured by

perſons of the firſt rank and character in this place, that in the Scheld there is not one veſſel ſunk, nor any other obſtruction than the treaties and forts I have already mentioned, to the paſſage of a ſeventy-four gun ſhip up to the walls of Antwerp, where a ſpacious and ſecure baſon is formed for the entertainment of any number of ſhips of any burthen.

This city, which is in circuit about four Engliſh miles, is fortified all round, except at the river.—In the north-weſt quarter ſtands the citadel. The out-works are very extenſive; the walls in good condition; but the ditches here and there filling up. It would require a garriſon of at leaſt fifteen thouſand men to defend the works with effect. The ſtreets and houſes, all of which are ſpacious, are maintained in good repair, and preſerve their original cleanlineſs and neatneſs. Of the old houſes many are ſuperb, and of the new, many elegant; nor do the churches and public buildings diſcover any marks of decay by time, or of the decline of commerce. —The magnificent houſe of the celebrated Rubens, which in front preſents to your view ten windows on a fl or, is ſtill kept in good order, having been frequently repaired, and, as I conceive, at the public expence.

The exchange, which is the moſt ſpacious as well as the moſt commodious in the world, and a beautiful piece of Grecian architecture, is ſtill preſerved in high order, although it is reſorted to by only about half a dozen bankers, and as many brokers. Of the canals that communicated with the river in the days of its magnificence

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and ſplendour, ſome are filled up, but they might be eaſily opened. Antwerp contains about ſeventy thouſand ſouls, whereof about ten thouſand are on the poor's liſt. The police of the city, with regard to the poor, is as bad as it is ſingular. There is an ample fund for their maintenance, which is diſtributed, not among thoſe perſons who are really indigent, but among the families of ſuch perſons as happened to be enrolled among the poor many generations backward, when it firſt became an object of a generous police to provide for thoſe who were unable to provide for themſelves.—In Antwerp there is little or no trade or manufactures. The inhabitants are religious to exceſs; for I avoid the odious and illiberal term ſuperſtitious, which the different ſects of Chriſtians are ſo apt to beſtow on each other. They are remarkably gay in their dreſs and equipage. The women, who are of a ſmall ſtature, are delicate, neat, and beautiful; but, being almoſt excluded from ſociety, and taught only the internal management of their houſes and of their children, they are not ſo ſocial as the ladies of France and England. They are generally of a pale complexion, a circumſtance which is perhaps owing to their conſtant confinement in their houſes: for they never walk abroad or take any exerciſe, except upon Sunday evenings and public days, when they take the air in their carriages upon the grand ſtreet (called the Rue la Mer) and covered canal, or in the environs of the city.

With regard to the wealth of Antwerp, it is computed to be ſuperior to that of any city of

Europe, of equal ſize and numbers. Their money is lent out on foreign ſecurities, from two and an half, to four and an half, and five per cent. Of late, they have veſted a great deal in the bank of Vienna. And it is a fact of notoriety, that of the whole number of inhabitants of Antwerp, not one family or perſon ſpends the intereſt of his money.

The old mortgage, which is ſuppoſed to be ſtill owing to the Dutch, for money lent to the citizens of Antwerp, for the purpoſe of defraying the expence of a grand reception which they gave to one of their princes, and which hung long as a dead weight upon the trade of that city, will appear, upon a fair ſtatement, to be nearly, if not wholly, diſcharged. But ſtill the city owes large ſums in its corporate capacity, although, like the Hollanders, individuals are at their eaſe, and in great affluence. The public debt is rendered eaſy by a low intereſt, not exceeding two per cent. But it will never be reduced, nor even confined to its preſent amount, otherwiſe than by the revival of commerce.

This people look forward with wiſhful hopes towards the re-eſtabliſhment of commerce, and the ſubverſion of that infamous treaty, which robbed them of their natural rights.—I cannot ſuppoſe that this deſirable event is at any great diſtance. It muſt needs be a mortifying reflection to the firſt power in Europe, that its power ſhould be ſhut up by a ſolemn treaty with one of the weakeſt ſtates in that quarter of the world, and many of its principal cities garriſoned by the troops of a moderate Republic. The death of the Empreſs will put the reins of juſtice in the hands

hands of a prince of great talents and virtues, as well as of high ambition, formed by nature, and called by Providence, to render his dominions flouriſhing, and to make his people happy. He is now in the thirty-ſeventh year of his age; for his goodneſs and affability, admired by all people, who are as anxiouſly impatient as loyalty will allow them to be, for the arrival of the happy hour of offering their voluntary allegiance at his throne.

Antwerp will enjoy advantages ſuperior to thoſe of any other country. The Scheld, a noble river, and which communicates with the Rhine, the Maeſe, and the Lys; a quick paſſage into the German ſea and the Britiſh channel; together with ſeveral excellent ports on the Adriatic ſea; are ſuch forcible inſtruments in the hands of a powerful and political prince, as will enable him to participate largely in the commerce of both the Eaſt and the Weſt, and to carry it on with peculiar advantage.—It will be the intereſt of England, as well as of France, to labour to divert the Emperor from ſuch ideas; becauſe the Hollanders (on whoſe ruin the commerce of Auſtria muſt riſe) have been already at the ſummit of their political grandeur, and are now beginning to deſcend by a ſlow but conſtant motion, which will acquire additional velocity in its progreſs, and terminate only in the fall of the Republic. This event will happen when the Dutch Eaſt India mines are exhauſted, and the whole wealth of the United Provinces confined to a few individuals in the trading cities of Holland and Zealand. The rivality and increaſe

of the Dutch trade and power are not to be dreaded; they will fall of themſelves: but it may become a ſubject of political enquiry, how far it may be judicious to manage the aſpiring ambition of a powerful nation, enjoying ſuch capital local advantages as may enable them to raiſe up again the fabric of their ruined commerce, and even to become one of the firſt maritime powers in Europe. Should the navigation of the Scheld be revived, and its natural prerogatives reſtored; and ſhould the Emperor avail himſelf of all the advantages which encourage him to cultivate commerce, his dominions would be an ample field, to which thouſands from all nations would migrate, with a certain proſpect of reaping a plentiful harveſt.

I need not deſcribe Bruſſels. Being a ſeat of government, and the reſidence of a court, it naturally encreaſes luxury, and various kinds of vice. The once-opulent cities of Ghent and Bruges* are melancholy monuments of what they were. Oſtend is well ſituated for a ſmall ſea-port, and a neat but not an extenſive line of commerce, as the harbour is not only incapable of being enlarged for the reception of ſhips of burthen, but is of difficult and dangerous egreſs, as well as acceſs.—I ſhall write to you ſoon from ſome place in Flanders.

I am, &c.

* The inhabitants of theſe forlorn cities lately cleared and repaired the ſtreets, and decorated, by lime water and paint, thoſe places which, ſome years ago, wore the melancholy appearance of deſertion, for the reception of the Emperor. This contrivance was well enough calculated to impreſs his Imperial Majeſty's mind with an idea of what thoſe cities had been, and were ſtill capable of being.

LETTER II.

To R—— W——, Eſq; London.

St. Omer, the 25th June, 1777.

HAVING determined to try the effects of the air of St. Omer, I came thither y water from Bruſſels, through Ghent, Bruges, Oſtend, Newport, and Dunkirk. The accommo-ations in the barks, on the canals of Auſtrian Flanders, are infinitely ſuperior to thoſe of the Trackſkuits of Holland, being conſiderably larg-r, with excellent apartments below for three ſe-eral claſſes of paſſengers, and a ſhaded quarter-eck, with benches for them to ſit on, when they hooſe to take the air. There is a good dinner rovided for each apartment; and the company ay be accommodated with wines of different inds, tea, coffee, and Flemiſh beer. The price f travelling, as well as the fare, is remarkably heap; and the beſt apartments are always filled ith good company.—At Dunkirk, I ſaw the in-mous pirate Cunningham. He has had the au-acity, at this place, to inſult Lord Ferrers; hoſe noble mind treated him with a proper con-mpt. That nobleman had, in the courſe of nverſation, remarked, that there was a very aterial diſtinction between the caſe of a native of merica in arms againſt Britain, and that of a na-ve of Britain in ſimilar circumſtances. Cun-ngham, who is an Iriſhman, and who, of courſe, as alarmed at this doctrine, vowed, in Lord errers's preſence, that he would watch his move-ents; and that, if he could diſcover his yacht,

he

he would follow and ſink her, with all on board.

This incident, with many others, bring my native country full into my view, and awaken the livelieſt concern for her preſent critical ſituation. The amor patriæ is never ſo ſenſibly felt as in foreign countries. It is ſaid, I think, by the Duke of Rochefoucault, that abſence deſtroys weak paſſions, but encreaſes ſtrong; as the wind extinguiſhes a candle, but blows up a fire. If this be a juſt theory, I may take not a little credit to myſelf for my patriotiſm.

The war between Great Britain and America is the general topic of converſation in all companies on the continent. Foreigners ſeem as much intereſted in the iſſue of that conteſt, as the parties principally concerned. Nine perſons in ten over all Spain, France, Brabant, Holland, and Germany, avow their wiſhes for ſucceſs and independency to the Britiſh American colonies. The different governments of theſe kingdoms and ſtates are reſtrained from avowing ſentiments of the ſame kind, only from motives of policy and temporary convenience.—It might, indeed, be naturally imagined, that ſuch European powers as have colonies of their own, would entertain apprehenſions, that the independence of the Engliſh ſettlements might give countenance and protection to a general revolution over all America; and that the united influence and commerce of that hemiſphere might exclude from Aſia and Africa, the maritime nations that at preſent enjoy the trade of the word. But their idea is (if I may judge of the ſentiments of courts from the uni-

verſal

verſal voice of the people) that America will be able to reſiſt the authority and arms of Britain until both parties are exhauſted; by which means Britain muſt, of neceſſity, yield up her pretenſions to ſovereignty over her colonies; ſoon become bankrupt; and thus loſe her weight in the political ſcale of Europe: as, on the other hand, they are perſuaded, that North America will be ſo weakened as, inſtead of annoying the Spaniſh, Portugueſe, Dutch, and French colonies in her neighbourhood, to become dependent on the ſtates to which theſe colonies belong.

To imagine that Britain will relinquiſh her dominion over her American colonies, as long as the nation is capable of raiſing ſupplies, would be as abſurd as to ſuppoſe the Americans capable of long reſiſtance without foreign aid. But if this people ſhould hold out even for the preſent campaign, that aid would undoubtedly be afforded. Prejudices againſt Great Britain, and prepoſſeſſions in favour of America, will excite an enthuſiaſm in noble minds, and introduce a ſpirit of chivalry, which will co-operate with the views and animate the exertions of policy in ſupporting the efforts of the Britiſh colonies.

But ſhould the wealth of Great Britain, notwithſtanding the difficulties ſhe will be forced to encounter, prevail in this arduous conteſt; the forced ſubmiſſion of a numerous people, poſſeſſing ſo flouriſhing and extenſive a territory, would prove but a temporary ceſſation of hoſtilities, ready to break out on the firſt favourable occaſion with redoubled fury, if their fidelity ſhould not be conciliated by other means than thoſe of fear:

fear: and, on the other hand, ſhould the colonies, aided by foreign powers, after a long and bloody ſtruggle, ſhake off, what, in the language of reſentment and paſſion, they call the yoke of Britain, they would, in all probability, fall under the power of ſome other nation or nations, whoſe tyranny would convince them, when too late, how little reaſon they had to wiſh for a ſeparation from the mother-country. The wiſdom and genius both of Great Britain and America ought, therefore, to be employed, not in forming plans of war, but in framing treaties of accommodation.—I ſhall, for the preſent, ſuppoſe myſelf called to the moſt important office with which ever mortal was dignified, that of arbiter of the differences between England and her colonies. In this character, then, I propoſe to the contending parties the following terms of accommodation:

1. To reviſe the acts of trade, on liberal, conſtitutional, and political principles.

2. To conſider Great Britain as the grand magazine of American produce, and her univerſal agent in Europe, Aſia, and Africa.

3. To allow America to eſtabliſh manufactures ſuited to her various climates; and the free exerciſe of trade within her own limits.

4. To reſtrain her navigation as heretofore, and to confine her importations to the manufactures of the Britiſh dominions, and foreign goods directly from Britain.

5. To comprehend, in the general regulations reſpecting North America, the Weſt India, Bahama, and Bermuda iſlands.

6. To

6. To repeal all laws impoſing taxes of any kind in America, or reſtraining the internal trade of the colonies with each other.

7. To conſtitute in America a general government ſimilar to that of Ireland; reſerving to the reſpective provinces and iſlands legiſlative powers, in certain caſes, and under certain limits,

8. To eſtabliſh a Lord Lieutenant's court, war-office, navy-office, boards of cuſtoms and exciſe, and other departments of ſtate; together with general courts of law, chancery, admiralty, and exchequer; all ſubject to the reviſion of the Britiſh government.

9. To confer titles, honours, and offices on native Americans, and others reſiding in America, diſtinguiſhing thoſe perſons who have invariably preſerved their loyalty to the king, and attachment to the parent ſtate.

10. That a general act of indemnity be paſſed, extending to all perſons willing to take the benefit thereof, on or before a certain fixed day.

11 That every eſtabliſhment, civil and military, in America, ſhall be ſupported by taxes and duties impoſed by her own parliament.

12. That America ſhall bear the charges incurred by Britain in the preſent conteſt, reckoning to a certain fixed day, as the date of the reſolution of independence.

13. That of every war in which Great Britain may hereafter be engaged, America ſhall pay a proportional part of the expence.

14. That a lord lieutenant ſhall be frequently appointed, who ſhall be a native of Britain, enjoying

joying high titles, and an independent fortune in Britain.

15 That native Americans ſhall be competent to be appointed in all military places and ſtations, thoſe only being excepted, which muſt be filled by general officers.

16. That all regiments ſhall be removed from one place to another by rotation, as formerly; and recruited with natives of Europe, when it is their turn to go to America; but that all regiments on ſervice in America ſhall be completed by American recruits, eſpecially before their embarkation for Europe.

17. That the Proteſtant ſhall be the eſtabliſhed religion; but that there ſhall be an unlimited toleration of all religious ſects whatever.

18. That ſuch Britiſh laws as concern the colonies, ſhall be recognized and affirmed by a general act of the firſt parliament to be held in America; from which period, the Britiſh parliament ſhall ceaſe to have power to create any new law to bind America; nor ſhall America have power, without the previous conſent of the Britiſh parliament, to introduce any law that ſhall abrogate, amend, or explain, any act whatever, already eſtabliſhed by the authority of the Britiſh parliament, and recogniſed by that of America.

19. That the debts contracted by the Congreſs be made chargeable on the new government of America; thoſe perſons and provinces being exempted from any part of this expence, who have continued well affected to the government of Britain.

20. That

20. That the currency of gold and ſilver ſhall be reduced to the ſame value throughout the ſeveral provinces and iſlands; and that the exchange from Britain ſhall vary from Britiſh ſterling only according to the eſtimation of credit, and ſuch circumſtances as may occaſion a fluctuation in the common occurrences of trade.

21 That to the titles of the king be added that of North America.—I hope it will not be thought an act of treaſon, with the moſt ſubmiſſive loyalty, humbly to propoſe, that when North America ſhall be added to the titles of the ſovereign, the word France be omitted.—His majeſty's titles will then run thus, "King of "Great Britain, North America, and Ire-"land, &c."

I ſhould now attempt to illuſtrate the wiſdom as well as juſtice of theſe arrangements; but I am afraid I have already exhauſted your patience. Give me leave only to obſerve, that the eſtabliſhment of a parliament, a court, a navy, an army, titles, departments of ſtate, and the other diſtinctions ſpecified, would have a natural tendency to introduce into America mutual jealouſies and luxury. The political conſequences of theſe are obvious. They would contribute, more than any ſcheme within the compaſs of human policy, to keep the colonies in a ſtate of ſubjection to the mother-country*.

I am, &c.

* The ſubſtance of this letter was ſhewn, in October 1777, to a principal American agent in Paris, who ſaid, that the ſyſtem was too liberal to be adopted by Great Britain.

LETTER

LETTER III.

To R—— W——, Eſq; London.

Paris, the 13th November, 1777.

I SINCERELY lament the reſtraint which the preſent conjuncture of the affairs of America and Europe impoſes on our correſpondence. On the ſubject of politics, which I know to be the favourite theme of my friend, I muſt write with caution and reſerve. The affairs of America, I have good reaſon to believe, are at preſent the grand object of deliberation in ſome of the leading cabinets of Europe, however they may endeavour to throw a veil over their proceedings by ſpecious pretexts. I venture to write my ſentiments, for the preſent, with ſome degree of freedom, becauſe this letter will be ſent by a private, ſafe, and unſuſpected hand.

The hoſtile ſentiments of F——e to Great Britain, ſhe will not, if I am not greatly deceived, much longer conceal. The antient rival of England has long been meditating the reduction of Britiſh power. Her preparations are now in great forwardneſs. She will ſoon commence hoſtilities againſt the Engliſh ſettlements both in the eaſt and weſt: but the ſtorm will fall firſt upon the eaſt; for, in that part of the world, the wiſe policy of France expects the ſureſt ſucceſs.—I hope the epithet I have beſtowed on the policy of a neighbouring and powerful kingdom, will not be offenſive to a mind ſo candid and liberal as that of my friend.

Je

It is not magnanimity, but madneſs, to undervalue the capacity of an enemy. A juſt eſtimate alone, of the power you are called to oppoſe, will enable you to oppoſe it with ſucceſs.—In truth, the adminiſtration of the kingdom to which I allude, make politics a ſcience, in which every man muſt be a proficient, who expects to riſe to preferment in the ſtate. Here ſtateſmen ſerve, as it were, a regular apprenticeſhip; for not one man, of however high birth or fortune, is preferred to an important political ſtation, without having previouſly given proofs of ability to fill it with propriety, in ſome ſubordinate ſtation. The power of the cabinet of France, to call to public offices all the genius and capacity of the kingdom, is one advantage manifeſtly ariſing from what is, in moſt reſpects, a great evil; I mean an abſolute government: whereas in Britain—a country bleſſed with a free conſtitution—powerful family-connections; great wealth, which creates dependents; and the capricious voice of the multitude, ſometimes puſh forward the ſtupid, the ignorant, the vain, into the higheſt offices. Hence the political exertions of France are conſtant and refined; while thoſe of England, though frequently powerful, are yet often deſultory, and made, as it were, at random.—But the great advantage that an abſolute has over a free government, lies in the ſecrecy and expedition of all its operations.—Curſe on the Courier de l'Europe! That paper has done, does, and will continue to do more hurt to Britain, than a perſon reſiding in London can conceive, perhaps

more than could be done by fifty thouſand troops. —It was the patriotic ſpeeches in the Britiſh parliament, circulated all over Europe, by the Courier de l'Europe, that invited and encouraged the enemies of Britain to join their aid to the American rebellion. The Duke of Richmond, the Earl of Shelburne, Mr. Fox, Col. Barré, with other patriots, are conſtantly expoſing the weakneſs of the Britiſh army and navy, and even repreſenting them as much weaker than they in reality are. They give melancholy pictures of the decayed trade and agriculture of England; aggravate the diſcontents and diviſions of its inhabitants; and, on the whole, give ſuch a deſcription of the ſituation of their country, as forebodes nothing leſs than national miſery and ruin. What is this, but to halloo in the ears of the enemies of Britain—Now is your time to effect our downfall?

As the French are led, by the declamations of minority, to form erroneous opinions concerning the ſtrength of Britain; ſo the Britiſh, without the excuſe of a ſimilar cauſe of deception, and merely from inveterate antipathy and vulgar prejudice, entertain falſe notions of the difficulties they have to encounter in a conteſt with France.—Among theſe difficulties I reckon the virtues of the preſent French monarch: who is not that weak perſon he is generally repreſented to be; but a judicious, humane, and juſt prince, who is not attached to any object that can withdraw his attention from the affairs of ſtate ſo much as for an hour. His views are invariably directed to the happineſs of his people; which he

is ſolicitous to promote by the moſt effectual means, however oppoſite they may be, in ſome inſtances, to the prejudices and maxims of the French nation. In the choice of his miniſters, he is guided ſolely by a regard to their capacity, knowledge, and probity; regardleſs of rank, family, intereſt, or religion. He has removed from the police of Paris, into the marine department, the ableſt miniſter and moſt active genius of Europe, I mean M. de Sartine; from whoſe abilities, information, and perſeverance, our nation has every thing to fear; as his department extends not only to the eſtabliſhment of a formidable marine, but alſo to the colonies in the Eaſt and Weſt Indies.

Count de Maurepas, the chancellor or prime miniſter, is rendered too infirm by age, to execute his high office with activity; but he does it with preciſion and integrity. He gave the ſtrongeſt proof of his patriotic virtue, in recommending for his aſſiſtant, as director general of the finances, a foreigner, a proteſtant, and a merchant, in Mr. Neckar: all of which characters were inconſiſtent with the eſtabliſhed maxims of the French government, and the ideas that were entertained that a prime miniſter of France muſt indiſpenſably be a perſon of the higheſt rank and family. The mind of Lewis the XVIth was congenial with that of his miniſter. He burſt the bands of bigotry and national pride, over-ruled the prejudices, and ſtudied only the good of his people. What has not England to dread from the ambition of a rival-nation, governed by ſuch a king?—From a king, the tranſition is na-

tural to the repreſentative of a king: let me therefore now paſs on to the Britiſh Ambaſſador at this court. He is not popular with the Engliſh and French, becauſe he does not miſapply his time in entertainments and diſſipation; and ſeems not to conſider it as any eſſential part of the duty of an ambaſſador, to diſtinguiſh himſelf by a ſplendor of equipage. The Americans ſpeak of him with a ſourneſs which ſhews how much they dread his talents and virtues*. The views and arts of the Americans have been counteracted at the court of Verſailles by the penetration and vigilance of Lord Stormont, with greater ſucceſs than they could have been perhaps by any other nobleman in Britain. His manner and addreſs in the common intercourſes of life, are in the higheſt degree polite and courtly: but his deportment, when he appears in his official character, is diveſted of all ſoftneſs, and marked by a rigid inflexibility, and even a commanding ſternneſs, which confounds the ſubtle courtiers of this country, and renders all their attempts to amuſe abortive. They ſay here, that it is evident my Lord Stormont was formed for public

* This was conſpicuous on a particular occaſion, wherein Dr. Franklin and his adherents ſhewed their diſappointment, by the eagerneſs with which they publiſhed the correſpondence between Lord Stormont and him in 1777, concerning priſoners. Had the Britiſh ambaſſador condeſcended to correſpond, in that capacity, with the American agent, the court of Verſailles would have ſhewn equal eagerneſs in recognizing the agent in his public character, and have left the court of Britain without any cauſe of complaint, even if the king of France had acknowledged the independency of America; the Engliſh ambaſſador having tacitly acknowledged Dr. Franklin as the agent of America, as an independent ſtate:—and by the ſame arguments; the partizans of America would have had a new and moſt powerful ground for cenſuring both the adminiſtration of Britain, and the conduct of its ambaſſador in France.

buſineſs

buſineſs at the courts of Germany. Unpopular as Lord Stormont generally is in this city, he is univerſally reſpected on account of his political knowledge and his learning. It is a ſingular ſpectacle to behold an ambaſſador devoting his vacant hours to the ſtudy of Roman and even Greek literature.—Lord Stormont is remarkably attentive to every matter which concerns individuals of his nation: ſo that in all reſpects he diſcharges the duties of his office; from which, in all probability, he will ſoon be releaſed. He has the ſole merit of warding off the combination of France with America ſo long, and of courſe, the influence which ſuch a combination would naturally have on Spain, and perhaps other powers.

The city of Paris, and the cuſtoms and manners of the French nation, have been deſcribed by thouſands of writers, and ſtill continue to be the ſubject of endleſs ſcribbling. It would therefore be, doubtleſs, a work of ſupererogation to lead you over ſo familiar ground. Yet as the numberleſs accounts which are given of Paris and its inhabitants, are in ſome inſtances contradictory to each other, you may be at a loſs to determine to which you ought to give credit. I have rode round the city of Paris on purpoſe to compare its extent with that of London; and I think it covers a ſpace not exceeding two third parts of that which is occupied by the Britiſh metropolis. But the height of the houſes, and the number of families, of the middling and inferior claſſes, which ſeverally inhabit each floor; and above all, the multitudes that are crowded together in the 4th, 5th, and 6th ſtories, do certainly prove be-

yond a contradiction, that the city of Paris contains a much larger number of people than London, where whole houſes, on an average, are occupied by five or ſix perſons. Here we ought alſo to obſerve, that in London many thouſands of houſes are untenanted, a thing which is ſeldom found in Paris. Houſe-rent, all over France, and the common neceſſaries of life, are amazingly cheap; the poverty of the lower people makes them œconomiſts; the habit of œconomy produces contentment, and contentment is happineſs.

I know not whether it has been generally remarked by travellers, that in France perſons of the firſt condition, poſſeſſing titles, high honorary orders, and offices, are not aſhamed to obſerve a parſimony, which an Engliſh gentleman of very humble fortune, would very abſurdly bluſh to imitate. Paris is a place where a man of faſhion may, with credit and comfort, live juſt in proportion to his income. You may live in the politeſt circles with a fortune of only two hundred louis d'ors a year. I have often dined in a houſe called a Reſtaurateur, where I have choſen two or three favourite articles, out of a liſt half a yard in length, and had my choice of a dozen different wines. My whole repaſt coſt only about eighteen pence: at the ſame time I have ſeen perſons of high rank, and dreſſed for court, dine for little more than the half of my extravagance. Your table, napkins, plates, and covers, are clean and neat: you are not diſturbed either with noiſe or impertinence, but on the contrary, attended to by thoſe who ſit near you, with civility and with reſpect. From the Reſtaurateur

rateur I will juſt ſtep in, for a little, to the coffee houſe. It is eaſy to perceive, from the converſation of the French, that they are not diſpoſed to forget their diſcomfiture in the laſt war, nor the capture of their ſhips by the Engliſh before any declaration of hoſtilities. The American war is the great topic of diſcourſe. Certainly, the countenance that is afforded in France to the American cauſe, tends to diminiſh that reverence for crowned heads, that veneration for the grand monarque, which forms a very eſſential principle in the French conſtitution. The cauſe of national and political liberty is now as freely diſcuſſed in all coffee-houſes and ſocieties in Paris, as it is in the Britiſh ſenate, or at any coffee-houſe or minority-aſſociation in England. The French government connives at this freedom, without recollecting the well-known proverbial ſaying, Mutato nomine de te fabula narratur. The word of the day is Delenda eſt Carthago.

Thus much for politics.—You will no doubt expect that I ſhould explain the reaſon why I am now at Paris, inſtead of ſailing down the Red-ſea, or thence to the coaſt of India. The fact is, that when I came to this city, I found that the paſſage by the Arabian gulph was not to be thought of, on account of the oppoſing monſoon, until the enſuing ſeaſon. I was at the ſame time confidently aſſured, that a ſhip would ſail from L'Orient in the month of September, by taking a paſſage in which, I might gain five months, beſides other advantages which might aſſiſt my inveſtigations, the object of which I have alrea-

dy hinted to you in a former letter. But I was amuſed by the armateurs, or ſhips huſbands, from time to time, and it was but a few days ago that I got matters finally ſettled with them. I ſhall leave Paris the day after to-morrow. The true cauſe of delaying the Eaſt India ſhips of this kingdom beyond the time firſt fixed for their ſailing, is the uncertainty of peace or war, and the expedition fitting out for India from Breſt, conſiſting of ſeven ſail of the line and four thouſand regular troops, under the command of Count D'Eſtaign. My mind is filled with melancholy preſages concerning the object of this armament: I am alarmed on my own account as well as on that of my country.

I have the honour to be, &c.

LETTER IV.

Mr. P——, in L'Orient.

Hennebon, January 1, 1778.

I HAVE received the favour of your letter, and thank you for having taken the trouble to give orders about my trunk. This will be delivered to you by my ſervant, who will bring hither ſuch letters as may have come to your hands this morning. I have punctually obeyed your laſt injunction, but my ſervant has forgot to bring the mineral water.

You, Sir, are one of the few perſons from whom I have received civilities ſince I came to L'Orient;

L'Orient; and you may believe that I feel your goodneſs the more ſenſibly on that account. I have lately got a hint, which I confeſs did not wholly ſurpriſe me; I was prepared for it by unhandſome treatment on the very firſt hour of my arrival in L'Orient.—A treatment to which I never in my life had been accuſtomed, very naturally led me to ſuſpect that ſomething was going forward which could not well bear the light. My curioſity was excited by that ſuſpicious caution and coolneſs, of which I found myſelf the object in the company of men whom I had never offended, and to whom I could be obnoxious only becauſe I was a Britiſh ſubject.—I do moſt heartily deſpiſe the idea of ſuſpicion; but I will never abandon that affection and loyalty which I owe to my country and prince, unleſs by unavoidable circumſtances I ſhall become the adopted ſubject of a foreign ſtate.

This nation is yet on terms of amity with that to which I belong. While I ſojourn here, expending my fortune, I am entitled to common civility: but if, inſtead of the well-known politeneſs of France, I meet with nothing but indignities and outrage, I am not to learn that the wiſe policy of civilized nations has provided an eſtabliſhment, whoſe ſacred function is to procure for their ſubjects reſiding in foreign nations, redreſs of paſt grievances, and ſecurity againſt future. To this eſtabliſhment I confeſs I have been, while in L'Orient for the firſt time in my life, obliged to reſort; and this I did, not clandeſtinely, but in the face of the world.—If in the courſe of a neceſſary narrative I have touched upon

upon any matter that may have given any offence, that matter was not of my own ſeeking; it was not the conſequence of a prying curioſity; it was obtruded upon me in a very unhandſome and diſagreeable manner. As to opinions delivered in the freedom of converſation and ſocial intercourſe; for theſe I hope I need not make any apology. Here I plead the common practice of the country, and eſpecially the practice of L'Orient; where ſurmiſes ſuited to the wiſhes of its inhabitants, are induſtriouſly propagated as facts; and where a manifeſt partiality ſports with unbounded freedom, not only with truth, but with inſtitutions univerſally deemed eſſential to the proſperity of political, and inſeparable from the exiſtence of commercial ſocieties.—If the letters of individuals (under the ſolemn ſeal which all ſtates have ſanctified) are not ſacred in public offices, the intereſts of commerce are injured, and national faith ſhaken, if not deſtroyed: if any unjuſtifiable freedom has been taken with my private correſpondence, I ſhall repreſent it in an open letter to the repreſentative of the ſovereign of my nation. Guilty minds alone are fearful. Even without the protection of the Britiſh ambaſſador, I ſhould not apprehend any injuſtice in France. I would confidently look for juſtice, and eaſily obtain it. The police of this nation is excellent, and is impartially exerciſed in favour of all who know how to avail themſelves of it, whatever be their country or their rank in life. Nevertheleſs, I can clearly perceive that individuals in this province are guilty of manifold acts of injuſtice to my country.

Theſe

Theſe men are, in my humble opinion, enemies to the proſperity of France, England, and America, as well as to the general tranquility of Europe. From the origin of the preſent unhappy conteſt, I eaſily foreſaw the evils which were likely to ariſe from wrong information and political faction. I wiſhed for an honourable, liberal, and conſtitutional accommodation between the branches of the ſame trunk, the ſubjects of the ſame crown, poſſeſſing the ſame civil and religious principles, the mutual ſupport of each other; but whoſe public proſperity and private happineſs, unfortunately for both, have excited the envy of other nations. My conduct has uniformly been agreeable to theſe ſentiments; ſentiments in a Britiſh ſubject, which I am perſuaded would find approbation even in the court of Verſailles. I hope I am a good citizen of the world; but at the ſame time, I profeſs what I feel, a moſt cordial predilection for my native country. I have often, Sir, had occaſion to admire your prudent caution with regard to public affairs: for whether in complaiſance to your gueſt, or from whatever other cauſe, your reſerve on political ſubjects in my company, has hitherto made it a queſtion with me, to which ſide your wiſhes incline: neither have I ever endeavoured to diſcover them. My ſentiments I have never concealed, and I hope I need not be aſhamed to avow them. It becomes a Britiſh ſubject to hold in abhorrence the conduct of ſuch perſons as clandeſtinely furniſh the means of protracting an unnatural and inhuman rebellion, which depopulates other countries without enriching

riching their own, and which may in its conſequences be productive of the moſt ſerious evils to all Europe.

If your civilities to a ſtranger are conſtrued illiberally by contracted minds, I ſhall deeply regret my want of reſolution to reſiſt the polite invitation of M. and Madame P——, of whoſe goodneſs I ſhall retain a lively ſenſe as long as I live.

With theſe ſentiments, Sir, I give you leave to exhibit them wherever and on whatever occaſion you may think proper.

I have the honour, &c.

LETTER V.

To R—— W——, Eſq.

Nantz, 3d January, 1778.

THE prohibition is withdrawn, and private ſhips are permitted to take out the uſual documents, (what we call clearances) for India. I have fixed upon my cabin, and prepared the neceſſary accommodations for ſea. The ſhip is ready, and we are eager to embrace the firſt fair wind to depart; yet, having previouſly conſulted the armateur, I determined to hazard a journey to Rennes, which is the capital of Bretagne, in order to meet a gentleman from Bourdeaux, to whom I am to commit the cuſtody of my laſt letters to Great Britain; and I have choſen, at the

the expence of twenty miles extraordinary, to take this great commercial city in my way.

In my excurſions through various countries, I have for the firſt time been treated with incivility at L'Orient, in the kingdom of France, where, of all parts of the world, incivility was leaſt to be expected. But the airy genius of France, in the full career of politeneſs, is not inattentive to the dictates of political wiſdom.

L'Orient, Nantz, and Dunkirk, of all the ports of France, are the moſt diſtinguiſhed for an attachment to the American cauſe, and a zealous oppoſition to that of Britain. The people of the American frigates (the Raleigh and Alfred) that ſailed lately from L'Orient, knew me, and could not be perſuaded that the place of my deſtination was India. They gave ſuch an account of me to their agents, that I ſoon became an object of ſuſpicion, and all my motions were watched with the ſtricteſt vigilance.

On the fifteenth of November I obtained his moſt Chriſtian Majeſty's mandamus, counterſigned by his miniſter of ſtate, the Count de Vergennes, for permiſſion "To paſs free and without moleſtation to L'Orient, in order that I might there embark for India." After my arrival at L'Orient, M. L'Avayſſe, a merchant, for whom I had left a letter, called upon me, and we walked together into the port. He aſked if I had been to wait on the principal officers? I anſwered, that I had not; and at the ſame time made an apology for this part of my conduct. M. L'A——e ſaid, we are now near the houſe of the Commiſſary of marine, and it will be proper

per to call upon him. I replied, with all my heart, if the time be not unſeaſonable. We entered, the Commiſſary was inviſible, and we left our names. Next morning, accompanied by M. A——r—d, who was alſo a merchant of L'Orient, and a French gentleman, M. Boutet, captain of a ſhip, I waited a ſecond time on the Commiſſary, who received us in his office. On my being preſented to him as an Engliſh gentleman going to India by the firſt ſhip, he aſked, with great rudeneſs, if that was the Engliſhman that had walked into the port yeſterday, and was ſuſpected of not having had any introduction to any perſon in the place? M. A——r—d then ſet the Commiſſary right, with regard to this matter, very diſtinctly. The Commiſſary next aſked, if Monſieur had a permiſſion to embark? He was anſwered in the affirmative, and the king's mandamus was laid before him, counterſigned by the Count de Vergennes. The manner in which the Commiſſary had received me, ceaſed to amaze me, when I beheld the contempt with which he treated his royal maſter's ſignature. "If Monſieur," ſaid he, "has no other permiſſion, I ſhall not ſuffer him to embark in any ſhip from L'Orient." We took leave of this menu officier, and waited on M. de la Vigne, the commandant of the port, who received me with all the politeneſs of a French gentleman. I alſo waited on M. Fremicourt commandant of the town, who received me with great politeneſs. After all theſe ceremonies were over, M. A——r—d, with his uſual goodneſs, undertook to write to his brother-in-law, Mr. Vincent,

Vincent, of Paris, to ſolicit a paſſport for me from M. de Sartine. I judged it prudent to ſecond Mr. Vincent's application, which I did by writing an exact ſtate of my caſe to the Lord Viſcount Stormont, the Engliſh ambaſſador at the court of Verſailles. This ſtep I thought abſolutely neceſſary: for I had been repreſented by the Americans, as a member of the legiſlature of Grenada, as a principal officer of his Britannic Majeſty's cuſtoms, and on the whole, as a perſon who could not in truth be bound for India. In the mean time, Mr. Vincent's application to the juſtice of M. de Sartine, was alone ſufficient for my purpoſe. I obtained, without difficulty, the deſired paſſport.

In my letter to Lord Stormont, which wore the complexion of a complaint, I took care to intermix with the detail I gave his Lordſhip, but in an indirect manner, ſeveral particulars which it was of more importance to my nation that his Lordſhip ſhould know, than the difficulties I had to encounter before I ſhould be permitted to embark at L'Orient. I gave his Lordſhip an idea of the underhand work that was going forward in that port, and an account of the military ſtores that were put on board of ſhips bound for America. Whether theſe hints were thought ſufficient grounds for any enquiry on the part of Lord Stormont, or whether that vigilant and able miniſter had not been apprized of the circumſtances I thought it my duty to communicate before I took the liberty of writing to him, I do not know: but this I know, that from the moment the Commiſſary of marine was informed,

informed, that I had wrote to the Britiſh ambaſſador, he became more particular than ever in his enquiries concerning me, my deſtination, connections, &c. inſomuch, that ſome of my friends at L'Orient began to be uneaſy about my ſafety. I was at that time at Hennebon, for the ſake of air and health; and being apprehenſive that the jealouſy and reſentment of the Commiſſary might attempt ſome miſchief againſt the gentleman with whom I lived, I judged it proper to communicate to him what I heard, of the ſuſpicions that were entertained of me; and at the ſame time, by a declaration of his innocence, which was founded in the ſtricteſt truth, to vindicate his character from any aſperſions that might be thrown upon it on my account. A copy of this letter, which I here incloſe, will give you an idea of my conduct on that occaſion. You will think it, perhaps, rather bold; but in all probability it has been the means of preſerving me from the greateſt inſults, the general conſequences, in ſituations ſimilar to mine, of betraying any ſymptoms of apprehenſion. Even now, I am not, after all that is paſſed, certain that I ſhall be permitted to purſue my voyage to India from this country. I found this doubt on the probability that the court of Verſailles will ſoon come to an open rupture with that of London: and this probability I infer from facts, from declarations, from general appearances, and from my intercourſe with perſons of this nation, as well as agents of America.

The Eaſt India expedition is ſuſpended only for a ſeaſon. The force that was deſtined to attack

tack the Engliſh ſettlements in the Eaſt, will be ſent, in the firſt place, to ſupport the Americans. Eleven veſſels are now loaded, and have probably ſailed from L'Orient and Nantz for Boſton, having on board heavy artillery, ammunition, cloathing, ſalt, and proviſions. The American ſhips were conducted, with the greateſt ſecrecy, by a French frigate, until they were clear of the bay of Biſcay.

The treaty on foot between Mr. Franklin and the court of France, is for an alliance offenſive and defenſive. On the one hand it is propoſed, that France ſhall ſupport the independence of North America; and on the other, that America ſhall yield up to France the excluſive trade of the fourteen provinces, the Carolinas, Virginia, and Maryland. I have learned ſtill farther, by a frigate which arrived at L'Orient on the 17th of laſt month from Pondicherry and L'Iſle de France, that a treaty has been concluded between a Monſieur St. Lubin on the part of France, and the celebrated Hyder Ally Cawn, the powerful and inveterate enemy of the Nabob of Arcot and the Engliſh. The object of this confederacy is the invaſion of the Carnatic, the emancipation of the Rajah of Tanjore, and the re-eſtabliſhment in Aſia of the commerce and influence of France. The French mean to ſend out this ſeaſon only eight hundred recruits in private ſhips, to carry beſides coals, ſtores, and ammunition: and all this is only preparatory to the grand operations of the enſuing year, which will be conducted by General Bellecombe and the Count D'Eſtaign. A very fine frigate, called La Sartine, in com-

pliment to the miniſter of the marine department, who is the ſoul of the cabinet, and the grand projector of all ſchemes in this nation, ſailed from Bourdeaux about twelve or fifteen months ago, filled with great and ſmall arms, ammunition, and other ſtores, cloathing, and ſome merchandize, under the direction of Monſieur de St. Lubin, who has been on the Malabar coaſt, and ſucceeded on the principal object of his miſſion.

As the port and town of L'Orient have an excluſive right to receive all imports eaſtward of the Cape of Good Hope, on condition of paying five per cent. indult on the groſs ſale (which is made in the king's warehouſes) beſides the uſual duties; ſo they have not hitherto participated in the trade of the Weſt. But as there is not any expreſs ſtipulation againſt the weſtern imports, they are now endeavouring to engage the Americans to trade chiefly with them; and their endeavours are likely to prove ſucceſsful.

The merchants of Nantz (which enjoys a communication with the beautiful river Loire, which falls into the ocean near the bottom of the bay of Biſcay, and which is navigable, as well as many of its branches, even to the interior parts of the kingdom) behold the rivality of L'Orient with evident ſymptoms of jealouſy and diſcontent.—It is remarkable, that the city of Nantz has always been the moſt forward in France, to enter into, and ſupport meaſures hoſtile to Britain. In the year 1744, the merchants of Nantz were the engine which moved the Pretender to urge his claim to the throne of Great Britain; they furniſhed him with arms, ammuniti-

on,

on, money, and ſhipping for the purpoſe of tranſporting him and his adherents to Scotland; and entered into a moſt enlarged plan, in order to favour his views. They have, in like manner, been uncommonly zealous and active in ſupporting the pretenſions of the Americans, and in ſupplying all their wants.

The city of Nantz is large, healthy, populous, commodious in the higheſt degree for commerce, as I have already obſerved, and remarkably pleaſant by means of the Loire. Ships of any mercantile burthen, and in any numbers, can enter the river, and come up to the city. I conceive the navigation of the Loire to be perfectly ſecure for about thirty miles; nor is it defended, as far as I can learn, any more than the city of Nantz, by any regular fortifications.

L'Orient is not only ſtrongly defended by the fortreſs of port Lewis, at the entrance of the harbour, and by ſeveral batteries on the oppoſite point, but alſo by others which protect the inner harbour; beſides that the city itſelf is a regular fortification. The houſes of L'Orient, its ſtreets, and the appearance of its inhabitants, who, notwithſtanding its ſmall compaſs, are ſaid to amount to twenty thouſand ſouls, exhibit a moſt ſtriking proof of the mighty advantages of commerce. Indeed, I have conſtantly been able to judge of the excellence or defects of any civil conſtitution, as well as of the virtue or corruption of thoſe in power, in any country, by the firſt appearance of the people, the ſtreets, and the houſes.

This will, in all probability, be the laſt letter you will receive from me in Europe. As I am certain that your kindeſt wiſhes accompany me, ſo you may be aſſured that my heart makes a ſuitable return of the warmeſt affection for you, and that I ſhall rejoice in every account that informs me of your happineſs.

Adieu.

LETTER VI.

The Right honourable Lord N——h.

At Sea, 12th May, 1778; by the way of St. Helena.

VARIOUS circumſtances have concurred to furniſh me with means of information concerning the political intereſts of Britain, as well as the views of other nations, her ſecret enemies. I have the ſatisfaction of being perſuaded, that laſt winter, I communicated to the ambaſſador at Paris, ſome hints which were of public importance. I alſo endeavoured, through indirect channels, to convey others to adminiſtration at home. I was then waiting for a paſſage to India at L'Orient, where, as well as at neighbouring ports, I diſcovered tranſactions, inimical in the higheſt degree to England, which I thought it my duty to lay before government. Among other things, I mentioned a piece of ſecret intelligence, which was brought in December laſt

to

to L'Orient, from the Iſle of France, by a frigate of war, the Conſolante. It was, that the Chevalier de Lubin had concluded a treaty with Hyder Ally Cawn, to which the Rajah of Tanjore had acceded. The reaſons which incline me to give credit to this report, will not, perhaps, be thought light or trifling by your Lordſhip.

I am enabled, by chance, to explain to your Lordſhip, the myſterious character and ſituation of M. St. Lubin, and for this I am indebted to a fellow paſſenger, who formerly held an office of truſt in the civil ſervice of the late French Eaſt India Company, and ſince, in that of the crown; a man of character, who has good proſpects, and poſſeſſes the beſt means of information.

M. St. Lubin is a perſon without any viſible fortune, who, by a long unſettled reſidence in India, has acquired an uncommon knowledge of the cuſtoms, manners, policy, trade, language, ſituations, and diſpoſitions of the ſeveral powers of that country, both native and European. From the ſtation of a private ſoldier in Mauritius, by genius, activity, addreſs, fluency of ſpeech, and withal a conſiderable ſhare of aſſurance, he has riſen to his preſent eminence. He ingratiated himſelf very much with ſome of the directors of the late Eaſt India Company; and ſince the ſuſpenſion of their charter, he has acquired the favour and confidence of M. de Sartine in ſo high a degree, that if his abilities had not been thought more uſefully employed in a walk of life not ſo public, he would have been appointed to the government of Pondicherry: this would have afforded a ſurpriſing ſpectacle to

the governor of the Iſle of France, who a few years ago treated M. St. Lubin in a very diſgraceful manner, on ſuſpicion of his being too much in the confidence of the Engliſh. He has lately been dignified with a military order, and is now inveſted with the ſole direction of two large trading ſhips on the coaſt of Malabar, where his addreſs, his knowledge, and his ready acceſs to Hyder Ally and the Maratta tribes, are very likely to attain the object of his employers, the re-eſtabliſhment of their trade, and the reſumption of their charter. The political ſyſtem relative to India, of the Duke of Choiſeul, is apparently the preſent ſyſtem of France, as well as of Britain: it is intended to reſerve the territorial property in the hands of the crown; at the ſame time to give every poſſible encouragement to the Company as merchants, in a line ſuited to their education, profeſſion, and capacity.

Monſieur de Sartine is, doubtleſs, the moſt ſubtle, temporizing, and active politician in the French adminiſtration, and promiſes to procure ſtability in one department of ſtate or other. After the example of the Duke of Choiſeul, he diſcovers the firſt mercantile geniuſes in the city of Paris, and avails himſelf of their ability and experience. He is now concerting with them meaſures, as conducive to the intereſts of his own nation, as they are ſubverſive of thoſe of Britain. Your Lordſhip's judgment, informed by an intercourſe with perſons acquainted with the local and political circumſtances of Hindoſtan, will direct the meaſures moſt likely to counteract the machinations

of

of M. de Sartine, and to fruſtrate the views of a ſtate extremely ambitious of the trade of India, and jealous of the influence which Great Britain has eſtabliſhed in that quarter of the world. But here your Lordſhip has many obſtacles to encounter, in the unabating reſentment of Hyder Ally Cawn, who conceives the power of Britain to be the only obſtruction in his career to abſolute dominion in the Decan; and the awakened ambition of a nominal king* bearing royalty in fetters, and mortified by the humiliating condition to which he is reduced, but who had hitherto wanted reſolution to reject the unworthy terms on which he held his ſovereignty, or ſo much as to avow a wiſh for his emancipation.

Your Lordſhip will alſo be led to conſider how far it is conſiſtent with ſound policy to ſecure, without extending, the territorial acquiſitions of Britain in Hindoſtan; and how neceſſary it is to counterbalance the influence of ambitious rivals, who will, no doubt, be induſtrious to alienate the affections of the natives from the Engliſh, and to ſhake their confidence in Britiſh faith. It will farther become an object of political conſideration, whether it will be wiſdom to commit the chief native power, into the hands of one mild, juſt, and firm prince, in whoſe friendſhip and gratitude you may ſafely confide; or, by dividing the power of the Carnatic § among various petty pretenders to ſovereignty, to render them all equally ambitious, jealous, and dependent; dupes to the artifices of divers European

* Rajah of Tanjore.

§ This alludes only to the Carnatic and the kingdom of Tanjore.

agents, who will flatter each of them with promiſes of protection and uncontrolled dominion.

This, my Lord, is a queſtion, the ſolution of which will diffuſe its influence to the Ganges, Guzarat, and Malabar: and in order to ſolve it, it will be neceſſary previouſly to make the following inquiries: 1ſt. Have the nation and company, conjunctly or ſeparately, experienced honour, fidelity, and friendſhip in any of the Aſiatic princes? 2d. Have they had cauſe to ſuſpect any prince in Aſia of treachery? 3d. Have the Engliſh nation and company adhered inviolably to their engagements with Eaſtern princes? 4th. Have the Company, or their agents, committed actions which may have looſened the bands of friendſhip, deſtroyed the confidence of the princes of the Eaſt, and withdrawn the affections of the people? 5th. Can any future act of the Company regain and ſecure the confidence of Aſiatic princes, and the affections of their ſubjects? 6th. Is the faith of government (conſidered as diſtinct from the company) yet entire in the Eaſt? 7th. May not the interference of government, by a rigid adminiſtration of juſtice, reſtore the influence of the Engliſh name, and reeſtabliſh the Company in the confidence and eſteem of the princes and people of Hindoſtan? 8th. Have not the Europeans greater reaſon to expect the benefits of commerce, juſtice, and protection, from a juſt, mild, and humane prince, than from an uſurper, political, bold, and ambitious; but ignorant of the laws, and a ſtranger to the ſweets of commerce?—for, let it be ſeriouſly conſidered, that the whole government of the

the Decan muſt fall into the hands of Hyder Ally Cawn, if it is wreſted on the coaſt of Coromandel from the legal ſovereign of the Carnatic.—9th. Are not the territorial revenues in India, with other manifold advantages reſulting therefrom to the Engliſh nation, capable, under prudent management, of contributing largely to the extinction of the national debt?—It would be ſufficient that it ſhould reduce it to that quantum which, by dividing a reaſonable intereſt, and ſecuring public credit, would add ſtrength to the nation, by attaching rich individuals to government, and by inviting them to commit their fortunes into the public funds.

The preſent, my Lord, is a period big with important events in the two extremes of the globe. Hitherto the power of arms which acquired, hath alſo ſecured European influence in Aſia. But the natives being now inſtructed in the uſe of arms and the art of war, a permanent influence among them is to be expected only from a mild and wiſe ſyſtem of politics, founded like the original inſtitutions of India, on virtue and juſtice*. The tyrannical ſyſtem eſtabliſhed in Aſia by adventurers from that diviſion of the world which is falſely conſidered as being the fartheſt advanced in refinement and humanity, muſt be exploded; a ſpirit of commercial liberty muſt ſucceed, whoſe mild and beneficial influence will gradually baniſh all ideas of deſpotiſm from European breaſts, and diſpel of courſe that

* The Indians have now become leſs virtuous than they were formerly, from their intercourſe with Europeans, who forced them to practiſe the arts of deceit for their own preſervation.

melancholy,

melancholy, diſtruſt and apprehenſion, which unfortunately have ſo long hung over the minds of the gentle natives of the Eaſt. — There is not in the world a people naturally more virtuous, more tractable and docile, or capable of arriving at greater perfection in thoſe arts which give elaſticity to the ſprings of commerce, than thoſe over whom the Engliſh Eaſt India Company have extended their dominion in Aſia.

Pardon, my Lord, this digreſſion—this Letter will, in all probability, releaſe your Lordſhip from the intruſions of a ſpeculative correſpondent, whoſe talents bear no proportion to his love of his country, but who nevertheleſs wiſhes to contribute his mite to its aggrandizement, by laying theſe ideas before the Britiſh miniſter.

I have the honour to be, &c. &c.

LETTER VII.

To J—— T——, Eſq; London.

At Sea, May 17, 1778.
lat. 27. *S. long.* 15. *W. from Paris.*

I HAVE already taken an opportunity of ſending you two letters by the Queen, bound for St. Helena. A favourable wind has continued that ſhip in our company longer than we expected, and has enabled me to add a third. On reperuſing the copy of a letter which I ſent under your cover to Lord N——, I have diſcovered the

the omiſſion of ſeveral material circumſtances, tending to create great ſuſpicions of the hoſtile views of France in Aſia, which, if they ſhould prove ſucceſsful, would be fatal to the Engliſh Eaſt India Company, detrimental to the Britiſh nation, and ruinous to their firm and faithful friend and ally, the Nabob of the Carnatic. The Sartine of 800 tons, mounting 30 guns, is more elegant, and has more accommodations than any ſhip belonging to France. In this veſſel M. St. Lubin frequently entertains Hyder Ally, the principal Maratta chiefs, and other Malabar princes, in ſtate; exhibiting on thoſe occaſions, the ſeveral colours of the Maratta and India nations, provided for this purpoſe in the city of Bourdeaux. The Chevalier carried out ſome merchandiſe with him, as well to ſerve for a blind, as to ſupply immediate neceſſaries. The bulk of his lading conſiſts in arms and ammunition of all kinds, proper both for fortifications and the field. He is ſo much in the good graces of Hyder, that the French flag is often diſplayed by that prince over the walls of Mangalore, his principal fortreſs. The maſters of the ſhips under the direction of St. Lubin, have orders to pay implicit obedience to all his commands. They are perfectly unacquainted with his plans and purpoſes. In the mean time, they are impatient of their inactivity, which diſappoints their views of private trade.

It is ſaid, that St. Lubin, on ſome public occaſions, bears marks of high diſtinction, even a red ribband.

band.—I commit theſe additional facts to your diſcretion, if they ſhall appear as important to you as they do to me, you will communicate them.

I remain as uſual, &c. &c.

LETTER VIII.

To—— ——

At Sea, in the ſhip Briſſon, 3 June, 1778.

THE laſt letter which I had the honour to addreſs to my fair friend, was dated at Madeira, 15th March, the day on which I re-embarked to purſue my voyage to India. In that letter, I gave you an account of the ſevere illneſs under which I laboured, when in the Bay of Biſcay, for the ſpace of nineteen days, without any very ſenſible intermiſſion; of the happy and rapid effect of that hoſpitality, for which the Britiſh merchants in that iſland are eminently diſtinguiſhed; of the kind and unremitted attention of captain de Cheſeaux of the Briſſon; and of the goodneſs of my honeſt fellow-paſſenger, the reverend Mr. Y——e.

Contrary winds, continued calms, and croſs currents, have made our paſſage from the day of re-embarkation at Madeira to this moment, very long and tedious. We are now ſtanding for the Cape of Good Hope, which may be reckoned more than half, and leſs than two-thirds, of the outward paſſage to India: a computation which is reſerved

reverſed in the homeward paſſage, on account of that circuit which the trade-winds render as neceſſary in the eaſtern as in the weſtern ſeas within the tropics.—As we are likely ſoon to have a week's refreſhment among the Mynheers and Hottentots, I ſhall occaſionally drink a glaſs of pure Conſtantia to the health of my abſent friend.

Our paſſage has not hitherto produced any occurrences that could yield amuſement to my fair relation: if it had, I ſhould have felt a very ſenſible pleaſure in reciting them. Our ſhip is eaſy; but rather a ſlow than a faſt ſailer. Whether it be, that her dimenſions between decks have been ſuited to the ſize of the people of the country to which ſhe belongs, or whether it be the effect of a ridiculous parſimony, there is not in the ſhip a cabbin which is not too low for my moderate ſtature by ſome inches: ſo that I cannot ſtand or walk upright, am deprived of uſeful exerciſe, and in conſtant danger of breaking my head or my neck. In the midſt of the inconveniencies attending this depreſſed ſtate of exiſtence, I find ſome alleviation of my ſufferings, in the aſſiduous kindneſs of the captain, who labours inceſſantly to make the paſſage comfortable. He has, naturally, a good and feeling heart, and I am perſuaded is a man of untainted probity and honour. His principal officers, following the example of their captain, honour me with marks of diſtinguiſhed reſpect; for which civilities, I am indebted, no doubt, to the owners and Armateurs, my friends Meſſrs. A——d and V——t. All the officers on board appear to me to be good and ſkilful ſeamen.

men. Inſtead of the ſpacious apartment that was fitted up for me at L'Orient, I enjoy the council-chamber alone, where a very handſome and commodious cott is ſuſpended for me, in which I enjoy at night pure air; ſo that I have occaſion to uſe my original cabbin only for the purpoſes of writing and dreſſing. In ſuch circumſtances, I ought not to murmur at little ſubjects of diſcontent; but on the contrary, chearfully to comply with the cuſtoms and habits of ſo kind a people. —But it muſt be allowed, the proviſions, which are abundantly plentiful, are not of the beſt quality; the cookery too is very bad; but the bread, paſtry, and vermicelli ſoup, are excellent. The poultry are ſo old, that hungry bull-dogs would find it a labour to tear the fowls in pieces. The hams are rotten: the ſalted beef old and hard, and every thing proper for human food, boiled to rags, and covered with naſtineſs. What heterogeneous and nauſeous compounds of pork, beef, geeſe, ducks, fowls, tripe, fiſh, bread, cabbage, onions, greaſe, &c.! Theſe ingredients are boiled up together into a mixture, to which they give the name of ſoup. Their ragouts and ſauces are made up of oil, vinegar, and garlic. Sometimes a roaſted duck or a lean mutton chop, reſcued from a load of nauſeous ſauces, is preſented in compliment to me and Mr. Y—e. But omlets of not very freſh eggs (for they have been on board now five months) have been my chief ſubſiſtence ſince I left Madeira. The captain, Mr. Y—e, and I breakfaſt and ſup apart in the round-houſe. We dine in the grande chambre, with the ſix ſenior officers, the ſurgeon, capuchin friar

friar as chaplain, two more paſſengers, and the midſhipmen in rotation. I have not expended a bottle of the ſhip's liquor ſince I came on board, having my own claret, madeira, and old brandy, each of the beſt quality.—To many things very diſagreeable to me, the French are reconciled by habit; nor do I reproach that people with what cuſtom has rendered familiar to them, and even pleaſant; but were I to undertake another voyage from France, my preſent experience would teach me how to make it very comfortable; provided that I could find a ſecond Captain de Cheſeaux, who, at the ſame time that he treats every individual committed to his charge as maſter of the Briſſon, with the greateſt humanity and tenderneſs, is ſcrupulouſly juſt, and attentive to the intereſts of his employers, and the ſucceſs of the voyage. Habit, which reconciles a French taſte to the moſt nauſeous viands, and which works ſo many other miracles, has made the pen very familiar to my fingers, and rendered ſcribbling the darling amuſement of my ſedentary life. It yields that ſolitary kind of diſſipation which is, at this time, the beſt ſuited both to my ſituation and diſpoſition; and which, by contributing to diſpel ſome impending clouds of ſorrow, conſoles and brightens up the mind. I frequently make excurſions into the ample field of politics. On this ſubject, I have taken the liberty to tranſmit ſome ideas to the ableſt ſtateſmen in Britain: the oſtenſible miniſter, but who, in too many inſtances, does not direct, but obey.

I doubt not but our ſhip's company may, from my conſtant reading and writing, like the people

people of L'Orient, think me a perſon of great importance. They may ſilently conjecture what matters are produced by all theſe writings. But on all theſe ſubjects I am reſerved, not only with them, but even with my companion, Mr. Y—e; who, by the way, will never diſturb me by any impertinent enquiries, for he has not a grain of political curioſity in his conſtitution. I now and then ſay, that this is a fortunate diſpoſition; it enables a man to kill time, and eaſily reconciles him to confinement.—A propos, Captain de Cheſeaux has a ſmall but well-choſen library: I have read it all over. Among other books, I found three quarto volumes of the marine ordinances of France, the works of Abbe Raynal, Voltaire, Rouſſeau, Vertot, and Marmontel.—Another thing comfortable in our little ſociety, is that without violating official diſtance, and that reſerve which is naturally impoſed by ſuperiority of ſtation, the officers are polite, eaſy and happily united with one another in great intimacy and friendſhip; into which the captain enters with a familiarity which conciliates their affection, without diminiſhing their reſpect.

That you may not have any excuſe for writing ſhort letters, I ſhall make little difficulty in demanding full anſwers to the queries which you will find ſubjoined to this. The letters I wrote to you before my departure from Port Lewis, thoſe from Madeira, and the length of the preſent give me an undoubted claim as a creditor, excluſively of the pretenſions of affinity and friendſhip. I was juſt going to conclude my letter; but I will ſtrengthen my claim as a creditor, by making

making it yet a little longer.——Remember, my fair couſin, one of my laſt injunctions, not to become ſuperſtitious or a nun. I know your good ſenſe, and that your mind is not one of the weakeſt: but the air of a religious manſion is infectious, and the zeal of devotees great, and ſometimes wonderfully ſucceſsful. By way of illuſtrating the truth of this poſition, I will tell you the following ſtory, with which, in reality, I ſhall cloſe this long epiſtle.

When I was at the town of Aire, in Artois, one of the brothers of the Engliſh Franciſcan convent, an honeſt jolly Yorkſhireman, conducted me to the ſhop of a Monſieur Collins, to get my watch repaired. I found Mr. Collins a native of London, above fourſcore years old, making a hard ſhift, by mending watches, to ſupport himſelf and a family, conſiſting of two ſtrapping daughters. His ſight had greatly failed him, as well as all the other means of ſubſiſtence and comfort, except his memory, his induſtry, and his religion. As he was a converſible man, I found not a little entertainment in his company; and particularly, in his relations of many curious anecdotes and various events, which had occurred in the province of Artois in the courſe of above fifty years. At length he introduced his favourite topic, that of religion, which led him to relate the hiſtory of his life. Being by profeſſion a clock and watch maker, and deſirous of improving himſelf in the external branch of his art, he went over to Paris, where he reſided for a conſiderable time. On his return home, he became acquainted with ſome of the Engliſh jeſuits of

St. Omer, who prevailed on him to ſojourn amongſt them for ſome weeks; in which time they converted him from the Proteſtant to the Romiſh faith. He thereupon reſolved to bid adieu to his native country, took up his abode in that in which he was a ſtranger, ſwore fealty to France, and married. His wife is dead. By induſtry in his profeſſion, and by the ſmall labours of his two daughters, he provides a ſcanty ſubſiſtence for his family; and in the midſt of poverty, and under the preſſure of years, ſupports a chearfulneſs by the ſtrength of religion. After attempting, in vain, to convert me to his religion by words, the good old time-teller got up, and taking a ſmall book from a ſhelf over his head, deſired me to read that. It was a ſmall treatiſe on the diſputes between the Proteſtants and Papiſts, compoſed in the Engliſh tongue by the late body of Engliſh Jeſuits in St. Omer.

Adieu.

LETTER IX.

Meſſrs. A———d* and Son, of La Rochelle; per the Count D'Artois.

On board the ſhip Briſſon, approaching the coaſt of Ceylon, 3 Auguſt, 1778.

I HAVE been ſo often deceived by judging charitably of the actions of mankind, that I have almoſt become a convert to that ſyſtem of

* Mr. A———d is a ſenſible and ſerious man, and a Calviniſt.

philoſophy

philoſophy which derives every thing that men do, or ſay, or feel, from the principle of ſelf-love. I was happy, gentlemen, in expreſſing to you, on all occaſions, the ſenſe I had of the kind treatment I received in my paſſage on board your ſhip the Briſſon; you will not therefore readily imagine that I would alter my tone without reaſon. I ſincerely lament that I have occaſion to do ſo. Concerned for the dignity of human nature, I deeply regret that it is impoſſible to diſtinguiſh diſingenuous profeſſions from marks of real friendſhip.

On the 5th of July, I had the mortification to diſcover that the Briſſon was a priſon, and captain de Cheſeaux its vigilant keeper. I found, farther, that the chains of two Britiſh ſubjects had been forged in L'Orient. It was not a ſtupor, but the very favourable opinion I had conceived of this keeper, that prevented my feeling the fetters that were imperceptibly fitted to my legs and arms. I approve the political concealment of thoſe illiberal orders to detain me and my fellow-paſſenger in this priſon, at firſt: but after having lived in the greateſt friendſhip and intimacy for five months, ſtill to attempt to continue the deluſion, even when the Cape of Good Hope, and Foul-Point in Madagaſcar, could no longer be held out to deceive us, was not more ungenerous than it was ridiculous. Would not the captain's conduct have been more worthy of praiſe, if he had frankly expreſſed a concern, that the inſtructions of the Commiſſary Gonèt, under the influence of two or three American ſhip-maſters, and other agents at L'Orient, had laid him

under an unpleaſant injunction? Then his priſoners would have treated Gonèt as a pitiful reptile, and thanked the captain for his candour. But we ſhould have thought ſtill more highly of his amiable qualities, if he had ſuffered us to take exerciſe, air, and other refreſhments, at the Cape, along with all his people, and his other paſſengers, as he did at Madeira. There is ſurely a diſcretionary power lodged with maſters of ſhips, as to the proper and neceſſary places of refreſhment; the health, the lives of the paſſengers and crews of ſhips, often depend on the will of the Captain, who may either confine them on ſhip-board, or ſet them, for a time, on the ſalutary ſhore. For my own part, I muſt ſay, the rigor of the maſter of the Briſſon, was to me very unſeaſonable; for I had been a valetudinarian during the whole voyage; and lately felt ſymptoms of the ſea-ſcurvy, which is curable only by land air, and land exerciſe. My companion, the Rev. Mr. Y——, and myſelf, beheld all the paſſengers, officers, and crew, people of all nations, complexions, ſects, and languages, refreſhing and amuſing themſelves on the delicious Iſle of Bourbon, while we, like two criminals, were confined to the ſhip; which, by the way, rode at anchor at that very point of view, whence engineers could make their obſervations with the greateſt advantage. But the truth is, there was not room for obſervations of any importance—a parcel of ſcattered houſes, erected without form or regularity on banks of ſand, without any fortifications,

fortifications, or troops to protect them.—It was probable the weakneſs of St. Paul's *, that was the great object of concealment.

During the time we continued in this ſituation, which was ſeven days, we were exhibited as a ſpectacle to numerous viſitants from ſhore, as if we had been monſters confined in a cage, or malefactors in a priſon: but it is juſtice to ſay, that thoſe viſitants brought many refreſhments, of which we were in dreadful neceſſity.

It was ſome time before I found out our ſtate of captivity; but having diſcovered our diſagreeable ſituation, I immediately determined to bring M. de Cheſeaux to an eclairciſſement. As he came on board that evening with ſome company, to ſup and ſleep, I aſked him, at ſupper, if the ſhip was to ſail to-morrow, as I had heard ſhe was? Yes.—Do you go on ſhore to-morrow? Yes.—"Will you have the goodneſs to order one of your boats to put me on ſhore?" After a wild ſtare, which I returned—"I cannot allow you to go on ſhore, and I am ſurpriſed that a gentleman of your good ſenſe ſhould aſk that liberty."—"For what reaſon am I particularly reſtrained from going on ſhore, when all my fellow-paſſengers, French, Italians, Jeſuits, Indians, and even your bill of lading recruits, have had that indulgence?" "Becauſe you are an Engliſhman."—"Is there a war between England and France?" "No." "Have I committed any crime on board?"—"No! Sir, no! but I did endeavour to obtain leave for you, and ſaid

* The capital port of the Iſle of Bourbon.

that

that you was ſick, but it was refuſed."—"Then I know now that I am your priſoner, although you wanted candour to tell me ſo before. I am refuſed that privilege in a French colony, which would not have been denied to me in New Zealand or Patagonia." From that moment my captivity ſat heavy on me, lengthening each day to the ſpace of a month, and detaching me more and more from my captain, whom I thenceforth began to regard as my gaoler.

But perhaps my reſentment is without any juſt foundation. M. de Cheſeaux, perhaps, conſulted my happineſs better by concealing, than he would have done by diſcovering my unfortunate ſituation.—Whether is it better that, forewarned of approaching ills, we ſhould ſtretch all the nerves of fortitude, and ſternly prepare to encounter them with firmneſs; or that, regardleſs of to-morrow, we ſhould graſp at the pleaſures of to-day? This is the grand queſtion that is agitated between ſtoic and epicurean philoſophers. The ſyſtem of the former inſpires a noble equanimity, but at the ſame time mars the enjoyment of gay and ſocial pleaſure: that of the latter, ſteeps us for a moment in rivers of pleaſure, but leaves us, diſſolved into weakneſs, a helpleſs prey to adverſe fortune. Yet the conſtitution of our nature ſeems to favour this laſt ſyſtem; for we are not ſo much diſpoſed to prepare for calamities, as to expect ſubjects of joy.

> Hope ſprings eternal in the human breaſt;
> Man never is, but always to be bleſt.

In favour of the ſame ſyſtem it may farther be urged, that Providence covers futurity, and all its

its evils, with a thick and impenetrable veil, as if to prevent the proſpect of ſucceeding ſorrows from ſouring the enjoyment of preſent pleaſure.

Thus, gentlemen, you ſee that I am a generous adverſary, having endeavoured in this manner to plead the cauſe of M. de Cheſeaux againſt my own preſent feelings. The uncertain concluſions of vain philoſophy, however, I ſubmit to the correction of thoſe ſublimer doctrines which are ſo well underſtood by Meſſrs. A——d.

Whatever ſentiments I may feel, for the preſent, towards M. de Cheſeaux, I think it juſtice to him to repeat, on this occaſion, that I look upon him as a careful and vigilant mariner, cautious, perhaps to timidity; from friendſhip as well as duty, anxious to promote the intereſts of his employers; and that the ſingular and conſtant attention which he paid to me during the paſſage to Bourbon, fills me with regret, that I cannot in all reſpects think ſo well of him as I did.

I hope ſoon to write to you from Madras, or from Pondicherry.

I am, &c. &c.

LETTER X.

To General Bellecombe, in Pondicherry.

On board the ſhip Briſſon, in the Road of Pondicherry, 7 Auguſt, 1778.

YOUR Excellency has been informed by captain de Cheſeaux, that we* are paſſengers in his ſhip bound for Pondicherry. But being,

* This letter was written in the name of the Rev. Mr. Y——e, and that of the author.

to our inexpreſſible mortification, detained on ſhip-board, as we had been on former occaſions, by the ſeverity of our captain, we conſoled ourſelves by a firm confidence in your Excellency's humanity and juſtice.

Our long confinement to a crowded quarter-deck, has rendered us ardently deſirous of liberty. That firſt of all bleſſings, we expected to have received from your Excellency's virtue yeſterday. Be pleaſed, Sir, to indulge us with the liberty of ſtating thoſe ſacred claims which intitle us to your Excellency's protection.

When we embarked at L'Orient, on the 27th day of January laſt, your ſovereign and ours were on terms of peace and friendſhip. If the influence of policy or of ambition, controlling the diſpoſitions of two princes naturally juſt, generous, and humane, has impelled them to the commencement of mutual hoſtilities; the faith of either ſovereign pledged to the individual ſubjects of the other, ought not to be violated. I had the permiſſion, Sir, of the court of France, to make a contract with the armateurs, for a paſſage to Pondicherry; and a contract for that purpoſe was accordingly made and ratified. Why ſhould this contract, without any caſus fœderis on my part, be broken? Nay, why ſhould the ſanction of the majeſty of France, be irreverently accounted as nothing?

We have heard, with regret, various reports that hoſtilities are already begun in Hindoſtan. We hope that thoſe reports are premature. But be that as it may, we beg leave to obſerve to your Excellency, that in the preſent ſituation of affairs,

affairs, we do not desire to enter within the gates of Pondicherry. What we ask, is, that we may be furnished with your Excellency's passport to the extremity of the territory of that settlement; with a small vessel to carry our baggage, and with palanquins and bearers to carry us to Madras.

We beg leave again to commit ourselves, in our present distressing situation, to the protection of those virtues which have recommended your Excellency, both as a soldier and as an administrator of justice, to the confidence of your sovereign, and the affections of your fellow-subjects.

We have the honour to be, &c. &c.

P.S. It may not be improper to inform your Excellency, that Mr. Y—e is chaplain to the presidency of Calcutta; and Mr. —— declares, upon his honour, that he holds no employment, civil or military, under the English East India Company.

LETTER XI.

To General Bellecombe.

On board the Pintade frigate, in the road of Pondicherry, 9 Aug. 1778.

UNWILLING as we are to withdraw, for a moment, your Excellency's attention from the important objects which now occupy your mind,

mind, an irkſome confinement conſtrains us to remind your Excellency of the application which we had the honour to make to you on the 7th inſtant. The letter in which that application was made, has doubtleſs, by ſome unavoidable means or other, eſcaped your Excellency's notice, otherwiſe you would not have neglected to honour us with an anſwer: for civility and politeneſs are as characteriſtic of the French nation, as they are inſeparable from humanity and bravery.

Permit us, Sir, to repreſent to your Excellency, the painfulneſs of an impriſonment at ſea, after an uninterrupted confinement of five months, and within a few yards of the place for which we were deſtined. But if we may not be allowed the liberty of going directly to the Britiſh ſettlements, would it not be equally juſt and humane to releaſe us from this ſtate of captivity, and to permit us to proceed to ſome neutral colony?

We have the honour to be, &c. &c.

LETTER XII.

Copy of General Bellecombe's anſwer to the two foregoing Letters.

J'AY reçu, Meſſieurs, les deux lettres que vous m'avez fait l'honneur de m'ecrire. Je connois tous les deſagremens de votre poſition: ce qui me fait le plus de peine, c'eſt de ne pouvoir l'adoucir dans ce moment. Je n'ay pas voulu

voulu vous laiſſer ſur un vaiſſeau, qui alloit combattre ceux de votre nation; ce qui m'a determiné à vous faire paſſer ſur la Pintade, où j'ay donné des ordres pour que vous fuſſiez bien traité. Je ne puis point vous faire deſcendre dans une ville qui va être affligée, et j'ay les raiſons tres fortes pour m'empêcher que vous ne vous rendriez à Madras. Si vous peſéz bien toutes ces conſiderations, Meſſieurs, vous verrez qu'il ne m'eſt pas poſſible de pouvoir faire mieux que ce que j'ay fait pour vous. Sitôt que les circonſtances pourront le permettre, ſoiez trèz perſuadé, que je ſerai très empreſſé de vous fournir les moyens pour vous rendre à votre deſtination.

J'ay l'honneur d'être, &c. &c.

Bellecombe.

A Meſſieurs —— and Y—e.

TRANSLATION.

I HAVE received, gentlemen, the two letters which you have done me the honour to write to me. I am ſenſible of the uneaſineſs of your ſituation, and it gives me the greateſt pain that it is not, at the preſent moment, in my power to ſoften it. I was unwilling to leave you on board a ſhip that was going to fight againſt thoſe of your nation, and therefore I determined to put you on board the Pintade, where I have given orders that you ſhall be well treated. I cannot ſend you into a town that is on the point of being beſieged;

beſieged; and I have the ſtrongeſt reaſons againſt your going to Madras. If you will well weigh theſe conſiderations, gentlemen, you will ſee that it is not poſſible for me to do more for you than I have done. As ſoon as circumſtances ſhall permit, be perfectly aſſured, that I will be forward to furniſh you with the means of reaching the place whither you are deſtined.

I have the honour to be, &c.

Bellecombe.

To Meſſrs. —— and Y—e.

LETTER XIII.

Monſieur Launay, Iſle of France.

On board the Pintade, Port Lewis Harbour,
23d *October*, 1778.

THE character in which we preſent ourſelves requires an explanation, becauſe we apprehend it is altogether ſingular; and in modern times, among civilized nations, without example. We are treated as priſoners without being nominated ſuch; and as criminals, though we are not chargeable or charged with the commiſſion of any crime. The voyage from L'Orient to Pondicherry by the Briſſon, on board of which we were paſſengers, though accompliſhed by that ſhip on the 5th of Auguſt, is ſtill unaccompliſhed by us. Thus ſituated, we think it

it neceſſary to fortify the mind of General Brillane againſt the falſe impreſſions of conjecture and miſrepreſentation: and in order to do this, we take the earlieſt opportunity of addreſſing you, Sir, and communicating the great out-lines of our ſingular ſituation, which your goodneſs, we doubt not, will immediately lay before the governor.

Under the protection of the government of France, we embarked in the Briſſon, on the 27th of January laſt, deſcribed as Britiſh ſubjects bound for Pondicherry, and having our names enrolled as paſſengers in the ſhip's diſpatches: an act which was accompanied with uncommon circumſtances, and which, were it neceſſary, would ſerve to authenticate, in the ſtrongeſt manner, the ſolemnity of the protection with which we were favoured. The ſacred protection thus pledged for our ſecurity, cannot in juſtice or good faith be withdrawn on account of any ſubſequent act of national hoſtility. Theſe, and other conſiderations, we ſubmitted to the juſtice and magnanimity of General Bellecombe, who, we believe, from the tenor of his polite letter in anſwer to us, did not mean to violate the faith of his court, by detaining us in a ſtate of captivity for a longer period than the critical ſtate of his government at that time led him to think prudent and neceſſary.

The Briſſon having been taken into the ſervice of the King, we were removed, under the denomination of Engliſh priſoners of war, into the frigate Pintade; where, ſince the 8th of Auguſt, we have been expoſed to the greateſt, as well as

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the moſt unexampled hardſhips. We were threatened not only with the dangers of unavoidable, but with the terrors of voluntary ſhipwreck: our commander declaring, upon his honour, that rather than be taken by any ſhip of leſs force than one of the line, he would blow her up with his own hand: although he had not a boat to ſave either himſelf, his crew, or his priſoners. With ſuch menaces conſtantly held up to our view, all the conveniencies of life would doubtleſs have been inſufficient to render us happy; but inſtead of enjoying ſuch comforts, we were chilled with rains pouring into our confined cabbins through the parched ſeams of an apparent wreck; deſtroyed by vermin, and corrupted by naſtineſs; and labouring, as we do now, under a malady which baffles all the power of medicine, the ſea ſcurvy accompanied with bile, the natural conſequence of a nine months voyage, whereof we were ſeven months and an half at ſea, without onee treading on the earth In one word, Sir, our healths, and moſt probably our lives, depend on an immediate relaxation of our preſent ſufferin gs

We have thus, Sir, taken the liberty to give you a brief account of this unexpected viſit to the Iſle of France; and we flatter ourſelves, that the unhappy flame which has been kindled by the policy and ambition of princes, will not conſume thoſe ſacred feelings of humanity, which, in the midſt of public conteſts, afford an aſylum to private diſtreſs.

We have the honour to be, &c. &c.

LETTER

LETTER XIV.

To Governor General the Chevalier de la Brillane.

From priſon in Port Lewis, Iſle of France,
30th *October*, 1778.

FROM M. Launay, who did us the honour to viſit us this morning, we have learned that it was your Excellency's pleaſure to tranſport us to France in the ſhip Favori, the latter end of next month. We readily conceive, that with every diſpoſition which belongs to humanity and juſtice, your Excellency, in the honourable diſcharge of the important truſt with which the confidence of your ſovereign hath inveſted you, is guided ſolely by principles of national policy. If, therefore, we ſhould be ſo fortunate as to convince your Excellency that the intereſts of France could not poſſibly be affected by our enlargement, we are confident that your generoſity would not heſitate one moment to releaſe us from a ſtate of confinement, ſo prejudicial at once to our health and our intereſt.

We declare upon our honour, Sir, which we hold ſacred, that Mr. Y—e neither holds, nor deſires to hold, any other office in India than that of chaplain to the preſidency of Calcutta; and that Mr. —— is not, as has been repreſented, a member of the Supreme Council in Bengal, nor holds any office, civil or military, under the crown of Great Britain, the Engliſh Eaſt India Company, or any prince of Aſia: and that his only object

object is to purſue the buſineſs of commerce as a private merchant in India.

Having thus taken the liberty of laying before your Excellency our ſituation, we have preſumed to expreſs a wiſh, that, if it ſhould not interfere in any degree with your political views, we may be permitted to embrace the firſt opportunity that may offer, of going either to the Cape of Good Hope, or Batavia.

We have the honour to be, &c. &c.

LETTER XV.

Governeur de la Brillane's anſwer to the foregoing Letter, received on the morning of the 31ſt of October.

A Meſſieurs ——, & Y—e, a la Tour.

J'AY reçu, Meſſieurs, la lettre que vous m'avez fait l'honneur de m'ecrire.—Je ſuis faché que les circonſtances m'obligent de vous faire paſſer en Europe ; mais le commandant de Madras m'a eclairé ſur la conduite que je devois tenir avec vous. Le capitaine du Sartine s'embarque avec confiance à Bombay, ſur un vaiſſeau Anglois. Il avoit avec lui ſon contre-maitre. Ils ſont arrivé à Madras en pleine paix, où on les a detenû priſonnieres, contre les droits du gens. Ils ſe ſortirent deguiſes pour ſes ſauvez. Le capitaine du Sartine a gagné Pondicherry: le contre-maitre a ete arreté et emmené à Madras; ce qui a cauſé vos malheurs, et forcé Monſieur de Bellecombe

Bellecombe de vous faire venir ici. Il ſeroit inutile de vous dire ce que vous avez vû, que les droits les plus ſacres ont eté violés, et que ſans aucun declaration de guerre, les poſſeſſions Françoiſes de l' Inde ont eté attaqués. Je ſuis donc forcé de vous faire paſſer en Europe; mais je vous donnerai en attendant tous les ſecours qui dependeront de moi, pendant votre ſejour ici; vous n'avez que les faire connoitre à Meſſieurs du Launey, et rien ne vous ſera refuſé.

J'ay l'honneur, &c.

Le Chevalier de Guiran la Brillane.

TRANSLATION.

I HAVE received, gentlemen, the letter which you have done me the honour of writing to me. I am very ſorry that circumſtances oblige me to ſend you to Europe, but the governor general of Madras has taught me how I ought to conduct myſelf towards you. The captain of the Sartine, truſting to the good-faith of the Engliſh, went on board a ſhip of that nation at Bombay. He had along with him his quarter-maſter. They arrived at Madras in profound peace, where they were detained priſoners contrarily to the law of nations; and made their eſcape in diſguiſe, in order to ſave their lives. The captain of the Sartine reached Pondicherry: the quarter-maſter was taken, and ſent back to Madras. Theſe are the circumſtances which are

the cauſe of your misfortunes, and which have conſtrained M. de Bellecombe to ſend you hither. It would be needleſs to repeat to you what you have ſeen; that the moſt ſacred rights have been violated, and that an attack has been made on the French ſettlements in India, without any declaration of war. I am, therefore, under the neceſſity of ſending you to Europe. In the mean time, I ſhall give you every ſuccour in my power, as long as you remain in this place: you have only to make your wants known to Meſſrs. Launay, and nothing will be refuſed you.

I have the honour, &c.

LETTER XVI.

Meſſrs. A——d and Son, Rochelle.

From the town priſon of Port Lewis, Iſle of France, 7th November, 1778.

THE letter which I ſend along with this, carries me into the road of Pondicherry. I ſhall now trouble you with a recital of the injuſtice and cruelties I have been forced to ſuffer ſince; a great part of which is owing to the diſingenuity, not to uſe an harſher expreſſion, of captain de Cheſeaux, and the reſt to Commiſſary Gonet of L'Orient. Being refuſed leave to purſue our courſe to Madras, either by land or water, we were removed, on the evening of the eighth

eighth of Auguſt, without any previous notice, from the Briſſon to the Pintade, a frigate armed en flute. On the 13th this ſhip was ordered on a ſervice, which exhibited to our view a new ſpecies of warfare, in the capture and plunder of eleven Indians, in an open boat at anchor, loaded only with fire-wood, which, they declared, with great ſimplicity, they intended to ſell at Madras. Two of theſe miſerable creatures, decrepit with old age, with meagre bodies, white heads and beards, and humble ſupplicating attitudes, preſented ſo moving a ſpectacle, that it might have procured not only their releaſe, but alſo that of their fellow-captives. Their ſmall veſſel would ſeem to have been their conſtant habitation, as it contained their money, their books of religion, and all their apparel. Their poor ALL, the wretched acquiſition of painful induſtry, perhaps of the labours of their anceſtors, was taken from them, their boat ſcuttled, and themſelves made captives, or rather ſlaves; and all this without benefiting their mercileſs plunderers.

Frightened beyond meaſure, without proviſions, liquor, or water, and with only rye-flour of the coarſeſt quality, we cruiſed to a great diſtance, even as far as Ceylon, until the evening of the 24th of Auguſt, when, being off the road of Pondicherry, a quartier marron, or Indian boat, brought a written information from Monſieur Bellecombe, that the Engliſh ſquadron lay at anchor to the windward of the road, and the French to the ſouthward. We inſtantly put about, and in order to get proviſions, as well as

to avoid the danger of being taken, we ſteered, having one hundred and ſeven men on board, to the ſavage iſland of Niccabar, (near the weſt end of Sumatra) where we got cocoa-nuts, a few chickens, and water.

Meanwhile our bodies were deeply wounded by cock-roaches, and other vermin in the Pintade: we were obliged to uſe that linen which we had already uſed in the Briſſon; and for a long time we wanted water for tea or ſoup, or for diluting medicines, until Providence, by a heavy rain, enabled us to catch ſome on the decks. We were limited to one meal in twenty-four hours, twelve perſons being reduced to the neceſſity of ſubſiſting upon a Niccabar chicken, which is about the ſize of a large pigeon; and about two pounds of ſalted pork, which upon a leſs dreadful occaſion I ſhould have called rotten and naufeous. Happily, two caſes, containing twenty dozen of excellent claret, remained of my ſtores, which ſerved us all with a glaſs twice a day; but there was not in the ſhip either tea, ſugar, or ſpirituous liquors, or ſo much as a wine-glaſs or drinking-cup, and cocoa-nuts were ſubſtituted in their room at Niccabar.—During the laſt five weeks of our cruiſe we were deprived of the privilege of the council-chamber; and alſo, during the hotteſt part of the day, of the awning on deck. Our captain, in order to ſhew his newly acquired authority and antipathy to the Engliſh nation, declined to countenance us with the common ſalutations of the morning and evening. My bed was not once made for twenty four days, nor could I undreſs at night on account

count of the vermin. I was at laſt obliged to wait upon myſelf as bed-maker, hair dreſſer, water-drawer, ſhoe-cleaner, &c. &c. The ſepoys and India priſoners, for want of nouriſhment, looked like ſo many ghoſts; and though they were ſcarcely able to crawl, were treated with ſhocking barbarity. We had only fifteen white men on board, (Frenchmen) all of whom were officers, one excepted. If there is any merit in having ſaved the ſhip, it belongs wholly to Mr. Riccard, who is nephew to M. de la Vigne, the commandant of the port of L'Orient.

In this ſituation we were brought to this iſland. Numbers of people came on board the Pintade the firſt forenoon, but the inſtant it was known we were priſoners, all communication was ſtopped, and only two officers left in the ſhip, until a late hour of the ſecond day, when M. Launay, the governor's aid de camp, and Major Thomé, viſited us, to declare—"that we were priſoners of war; that we were to be confined in Fort Blanc two miles from town;) that the governor had received poſitive orders concerning us; that he was directed to ſend us back to France; but that as our healths were greatly impaired, we ſhould be indulged with a reſidence in priſon until we ſhould be in a condition to embark. He told us, finally, that the major had come to conduct us to the fort, and that we were to converſe only with Mr. Launay. He added, after a ſhort pauſe, that a traiteur ſhould ſend us dinner and ſupper from town, at our own expence."

We were inſtantly conveyed, with our baggage, by water to the fort. There being but

two

two apartments in that building, and both of them occupied, Major Thomé civilly gave us the choice of lodging either in the kitchen, or under a ſhed, where gun-carriages were kept, or in the guard-room with the ſoldiers. I aſked the major, if, being priſoners of war, we were accounted as criminals? "No, certainly not!" I then ſaid, that as the kitchen was infinitely worſe than any dungeon, it would be better to run the riſque of death at ſea, than to periſh miſerably in ſo horrible a manſion; therefore, I intreated him to embark us in one of the veſſels that was to ſail in a day or two for Europe. The reverend Mr. Y— deſired that one of the ſoldiers might be permitted to ſhoot him through the head. The major replied, that he would repreſent our ſituation, and our deſire to embark for Europe, to the governor. We lay that night, without ſleep, on the benches with the ſoldiers in the guard-room. Next day, an officer appeared about eleven o'clock, to conduct us to the town-ſteeple; the third floor of which is now our apartment. It is immediately over the main-guard, having two windows to each of its four ſides; and being elevated above every other houſe, it enjoys a pure air, and commands a full proſpect of the harbour, the forts, the parade, the barracks, the government-houſe, and the environs of the town. There are three flights of ſteps, by means of which there is a communication between our chamber and a terrace, on the ſummit of the building. Thither I generally repair in the morning, before any of the inhabitants are awake, and view all the places around. I then

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come down, and having acceſs in the morning and evening to the terrace over the main-guard and poſt-gate, I walk there till chocolate is ready: the reſt of the day I employ in reading and writing, until the terrace becomes cool towards evening, when I take another walk, eat a ſallad, drink a bottle of cool wine, and then retire into an apartment, which admits two beds, of about twenty four inches each in breadth, and an empty ſpace between them of about fifteen inches. The officer upon duty, and M. Launay are allowed to viſit us. Our traiteur is permitted to ſee us twice in the week. When our laundreſs comes, ſhe is accompanied by a corporal. Even the clock-maker who winds up the town clock, when he paſſes our apartment for that purpoſe, is attended by a non-commiſſioned officer: nay, if a negro comes to do any little buſineſs for us, ſuch as fetching or carrying our linen, he is accompanied by a ſoldier. The very meſſenger of a letter from the governor, although an European, was attended in like manner. After a confinement of ſome days, we were given to underſtand that we owed our bad uſage to the miſrepreſentations of M. Gonet, before we left L'Orient, and as I was not the perſon I was repreſented to be, I was perſuaded to write a very adulatory letter (of which I am much aſhamed) to Governeur la Brillane, praying that we might be permitted to embrace the firſt opportunity of going either to the Cape of Good Hope or Batavia. I herewith ſend you copies of my adulatory letter, and his excellency's anſwer.

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It is with concern that I am obliged to obſerve to you, gentlemen, that from all the circumſtances which now appear, I cannot but ſuſpect that you were privy to the orders which accompanied us from L'Orient, and the obligation relative to us, ſigned by captain de Cheſeaux. If this conjecture be well founded, you have acted, in one inſtance at leaſt, in a manner unworthy of your eſtabliſhed reputation; your profeſſions of friendſhip have not been ſincere; you have not fulfilled the contract into which you entered with us, for a paſſage in your ſhip to Pondicherry. But I will endeavour to ſtifle theſe notions, which obtrude on my mind, and to think on nothing in your conduct towards me, but your former kindneſs. It is probable I may be at L'Orient, about three weeks after you receive this. Heaven only knows what awaits us in France! I intreat you, in conſideration of the peculiar circumſtances of our captivity, to make early application for our releaſe. We are told, that although priſoners of war, we are to pay, each of us, 3000 livres for our paſſage home in an old crazy bark. Our dinner and ſupper now coſt us 600 livres per month, without wine.

The king has lately accommodated us with a couple of ſtools, two hoſpital beds, two water goblets, and two ruſty iron candleſticks: M. Launay's kindneſs to his old acquaintance Mr. Y—, ſupplies our other wants. I have reduced this letter to as narrow a compaſs, as the extent of its ſubject, and my own feelings would admit.

I have the honour to be, &c.

LETTER

LETTER XVII.

To J. M——— Eſq. under cover to W. H——r, Eſq. of Antwerp.

In the Town Priſon of Port Lewis, in Mauritius, 8th *Nov.* 1778.

A DIRECT correſpondence between Mr. R—— W—— of London and myſelf, being no longer practicable, on account of our reſpective departures to oppoſite hemiſpheres, we agreed to make a common friend the depoſitary of our communications; and that character, Sir, we flattered ourſelves we ſhould find in you.—You will have the goodneſs to tranſmit my letters to our friend, wherever he may be: I ſhall be happy if you ſhall receive as much entertainment from them as ſhall compenſate for this trouble.

Having re-embarked at Madeira on board the Briſſon, on Sunday the 15th of March, we encountered alternate ſtorms and calms for the ſpace of eight days; after which time, we enjoyed fair weather, and a favourable gale. The peak of Teneriffe ſhewed its pointed top exalted above wreaths of white clouds, which, to our ſenſes, made a chaſm between the lower part of that ſtupendous mountain and the upper, that ſeemed ſuſpended in the ſky. As we paſſed between Teneriffe and the great Canary, in a ſerene atmoſphere, we enjoyed a delightful proſpect of the inimitable beauties of each iſland. While we ſteered our courſe between the Cape de Verd iſles,

iſles, and the coaſt of Africa, we ſoon began to feel the effects of this near approach to the high land of that continent, in frequent calms, which, with a ſtrong north-eaſt current, diſappointed all our hopes of a quick paſſage, and threatened us with a view of the Gold Coaſt, Calabar, Benin, Congo, and Angola. In the ſpace of three tedious weeks, we crawled on to the equinoctial line—the languor of this ſlow progreſs was ſomewhat relieved by the amuſement of catching enormous ſharks, bonnettas, and albicores. Between the ſecond and third degrees of ſouth latitude, upon the 15th of April, we were entertained for two hours with the examination of a kind of fiſh, ſuch as had never been ſeen before by any one on board. As it leiſurely moved round the ſhip, raiſing its enormous tail and fins above the ſurface of the water, I took occaſion to form ſome eſtimate of its length by the breadth of the ſhip, and computed it to be forty Engliſh feet: its thickneſs I judged to be ten feet in diameter. The form of this animal reſembles that of a ſhark: It is beautifully ſpotted like a leopard; in ſome parts, the ſpots on its body reſemble that on the peacock's tail. The monſter portended good to us: for while we were admiring its ſize, the beauty of its ſkin, and the ſwarms of leſſer fiſhes with which it was ſurrounded, an unexpected breeze ſuddenly filled our ſails, and overſpread the ſmooth element on which we floated, with ſhort broken waves, which the ſeamen joyfully diſtinguiſhed by the name of "les têtes de moutons," (ſheep or lambs heads.)

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The creature I had ſeen, dwelt long upon my imagination, and recalled to my mind the ſtories of the ancients concerning ſea monſters, which I began ſcarcely to regard as fabulous. My fancy made a wild, but pleaſing excurſion to the Norwegian ſeas, the ſeat of Krakens or Korvens, ſea-ſnakes, and ſerpents of the ocean: animals whoſe ſtupendous dimenſions had long exceeded the bounds of credibility; but which, their exiſtence being now fully proved, are no longer accounted chimerical by the moſt incredulous.

It is remarkable that the animal productions of the ſea are, ſome of them, infinitely larger than any living creature bred on the face of the earth. The animals, again, that tread the ground, are in general larger than thoſe that fly in the air. From this analogy I ſhould be apt to conclude, that were the interior parts of the earth, according to the theory of certain naturaliſts, replete with an enormous abyſs of waters, thoſe waters muſt be the manſion of animals ſtill more huge and ſtupendous than any known on the ſurface of this terraqueous globe.

Having been ſmoothly carried by a gentle breeze acroſs the ſouthern latitudes, we fell in, on the 7th of May, with the Engliſh Company's ſhips Southampton, Naſſau, and Queen, with which we kept company, and exchanged ſocial viſits until the 17th, when the Queen, having on board the annual ſtores for St. Helena, directed her courſe for that iſland, carrying letters to Europe from all the other ſhips.—It is but juſtice to French hoſpitality, to ſay, that the Naſſau, having between forty and fifty paſſengers

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gers on board, and their freſh proviſions being wholly expended, was ſupplied by the bounty of captain de Cheſeaux with ſheep and poultry. We made the high mountains of Bourbon on the 25th of June, twenty four days after our ſounding on the weſt edge of the Eel bank, nearly oppoſite to Falſe Bay, at the Cape of Good Hope. On the following day we anchored in thirty fathom water, about two miles from the town, within the beautiful and ſpacious bay of St. Paul.

In the courſe of theſe twenty four days, we were ſo much thwarted by the currents, that after making large allowances in the daily reckonings, we were ſtill eighty leagues farther weſt than we expected to be, from our calculations. I refer you for an account of the uſage I have received at Bourbon, to the incloſed copy of a letter I wrote, at ſea, to M. A——d and Son. I ſhall hereafter give you a deſcription of Bourbon, and other iſlands in theſe parts; their climate, ſoil, productions, and inhabitants.

We weighed anchor, and ſailed from Bourbon on the fifth of July, and ſoon paſſed, with a briſk gale, over the banks or ſhoals which are laid down in charts between Madagaſcar and the French iſlands of Seychelle, which is a much ſhorter route than the common circuit to the ſouth eaſt. The natural caution of captain de Cheſeaux made him very attentive to the courſe: he was conſtantly ſounding, but never met with any thing that could be any occaſion of alarm. The late admiral Boſcawen ſailed over thoſe bugbear banks laſt war with a large fleet. I think it

a pity

a pity that our nation have not attained a ſufficient knowledge of a paſſage which, at certain ſeaſons, would ſhorten the navigation to India by ſome weeks.

Neither the French, nor any other navigators, except the Engliſh, take aſtronomical obſervations at ſea, for the purpoſe of aſcertaining the longitude; a piece of ignorance or neglect to which I may attribute all my misfortunes: for had we arrived one day ſooner at Pondicherry, I ſhould have eaſily obtained a paſſport for Madras; and I ſhould have reached that place ſeveral days ſooner, if our mariners had known how to correct, by the aid of aſtronomy, the errors into which they were led by rapid currents, which coſt them, on a fair computation, four days in ſoundings, and laying to whole nights, through fear of approaching the coaſt of Malabar. Notwithſtanding theſe delays, and the ſlow motion of our ſhip, we anchored off Tranquebar on the 30th day after we left Bourbon; and on the following day dropt anchor at Pondicherry.

It is worthy of notice, that though the French proviſions are not ſo ſubſtantial as thoſe of Engliſh ſhips, yet out of one hundred and fifty perſons on board the Briſſon, not one died in a voyage of ſix months; nor were there above three perſons in the ſhip who were in any degree afflicted with the ſea-ſcurvy. Theſe things I attribute to the following cauſes:—the ſhip was purified once a week in temperate, and twice in hot climates, with water; and betwixt decks ſprinkled with vinegar. The cabin doors and windows being cloſely ſhut, and the hatches faſtened down

and

and covered with tarpaulins, incenſe was burnt in various parts of the ſhip. The ſeamen and officers danced in a ring on the quarter-deck every fair evening, to the muſic of a bag-pipe, and minuets and cotillons to the violin. They had ſoup-meagre every day, and alſo an allowance of freſh loaf bread, made of coarſe but ſweet flour.

Before we anchored in the road of Pondicherry, a conveyance conſiſting of three pieces of light wood, faſtened together by withs or twigs, called a catty-marran, carrying two Indians, paddling in attitudes peculiar to their countrymen, brought directions on board from Governor General Bellecombe to the captain, not to let any paſſengers go on ſhore, before he ſhould have tranſmitted an account of their names, countries, and deſtinations, and until he ſhould receive his further orders. The letter in which theſe inſtructions were conveyed, was ſecured from ſea or rain water, and concealed from obſervation, in a kind of ſtraw hat which one of the meſſengers wore upon his head. The attitudes of the paddlers were ſtriking to a ſtranger. They were ſupported on their knees, having the under parts of their thighs extended along the calves of their legs, and the extremities of their buttocks reſting on their heels. The catty-marran, which was about ten feet in length, and thirteen inches wide, and drew to a point at each end, was continually under water, and yielded to the ſurge of the ſea.

We had not been many minutes at anchor, when officers from the men of war, and from ſhore,

ſhore, came on board the Briſſon, with the mortifying news that hoſtilities had commenced between the French and Engliſh in India, but not in Europe; that Chandernagore in Bengal was taken on the 10th of June, and that the Engliſh army and the Nabob's, both under the command of General Munro, were on their march to beſiege Pondicherry. All the paſſengers except Mr. Y—e and myſelf received permiſſion in the courſe of that day, to diſembark.

On the 8th of Auguſt General Munro's army appeared, and encamped on the red hills, a league diſtant from the back of Pondicherry. On the morning of the 9th General Munro ſummoned General Bellecombe to ſurrender the town and fortreſs to the troops which he commanded*: whereupon M. Bellecombe immediately ſent orders to M. Tronjolly to weigh, and attack the Britiſh ſquadron; an order which was forthwith obeyed with great alacrity. The Engliſh ſquadron, conſiſting of five ſail, including the Cormorant ſloop of war, appeared working up from the northward: that of the French, conſiſting of an equal number of ſhips, but larger, having a ſuperiority of 36 guns, and 700 men, ſtood to the ſouthward in order to preſerve the weather-gage, and anchored at two leagues diſtance from ſhore. An action commenced on the 10th, which laſted with great heat for ſeventy-four minutes. I was never in ſo anxious a ſituation: on board a French frigate, in the midſt

* It was alledged at Pondicherry, that the ſummons was in the name of the King of Great Britain.

of

of the enemies of my country, a ſpectator of a ſea-engagement between the ſquadrons of England and France.—We all waited in painful ſuſpence for the iſſue. At length I eagerly pointed out to the captain and officers of the Pintade, three of the French ſquadron hawling their wind and running to the ſouthward, full fifteen minutes before the action ceaſed between the capital ſhips. After the whole French ſquadron had, with all their ſails ſet, quitted the field, Sir Edward Vernon's ſquadron remained fifteen minutes on the ſpot where they had engaged, as if deliberating whether to purſue the enemy, or to bear away in order to refit. They choſe the latter alternative, having firſt ſpliced their cordage, and mended their ſails. In this action there happened a very remarkable incident: one broadſide from the Rippon, pierced the hull of the Briſſon in thirteen places, with heavy metal.

I had always, until this day, entertained an opinion, that the Engliſh mode of aiming at the hull, was the beſt principle of conducting a naval engagement, with ſucceſs. That opinion I am now forced to relinquiſh. I ſaw the French ſquadron flying to windward, carrying every ſail and rope with which they entered into action; and I ſaw the Engliſh keep the ſea as victors, but ſo mauled in their ſails and rigging, that for a conſiderable time they were unable to purſue, or even to ſail before the wind. I do believe, that had only the quarter-deck and ſome of the upper guns been levelled againſt the rigging of the enemy's ſhips in the action, they could not have eſcaped.

When

When the Briſſon anchored in the road of Pondicherry, I could perceive very diſtinctly, with a ſpying-glaſs, that the entrances into the town, at the ſouth and north ends, by the ſea ſide, were open and defenceleſs. But General Bellecombe had ſet 5000 natives to work in fortifying thoſe places and ſtockading the ſea-beach. They wrought at night with flambeaus; and the General himſelf, who ſometimes ſlept on the ramparts, was conſtantly ſuperintending them in every quarter: and in order to raiſe money to carry on the fortifications, he even pledged his lady's jewels.

On the 13th of Auguſt, the Pintade was ordered to a ſtation four leagues to the northward of Pondicherry, in order to intercept any communication between the Engliſh ſquadron at Sadras, and the army under General Munro.

The incloſed copy of a letter to Mr. A——d, will give you an account of our movements from that time, until our arrival at the Nicabar iſlands, which run in a northerly direction from Sumatra up the bay of Bengal; and of which I ſhall on ſome future occaſion, give you a deſcription.

On board the Favori, St. Paul's Bay, Iſle of Bourbon, 10th *Dec.* 1778.

I refer you for an account of my hiſtory at this place, to the incloſed copies of letters to different perſons. We have now added to our cabin paſſengers, M. de la Combe, who is the procureur du Roy, with his lady and two children; the Abbé de Fontaine, chief of the apoſ-

tolic miſſionaries, and M. Kerbalanec, one of the nobleſſe of Bretagne.

I ſhall interrupt this journal for the preſent, as we have weighed anchor, and are ſailing out of the bay of St. Paul's for Europe.

LETTER XVIII.

Monſieur Anquitil, in St. Denis.

On board the Favori, L'Iſle de Bourbon,
St. Denis's Road, 30th *Nov.* 1778.

I MAY venture, Sir, to join the thanks of Mr. Y—e with my own, for the pains you have taken to procure to us the benefit and pleaſure of land air, and exerciſe and ſocial enjoyment on ſhore. I venerate the fair character of the Viſcount de Souillac, and ſhould be happier in receiving marks of favour from a liberal mind like his, even under the roof of a baker*, and the care of a military ſerjeant, than in the careſſes of his ſuperior in the iſle of France. Nevertheleſs, as the ſhip is to remain in this road only for a few days, I chuſe to decline to accept the governor's obliging indulgence.

I have the honour to be, &c.

* A baker's houſe was propoſed for our lodging-houſe on ſhore. Bakers in thoſe iſlands, are not ſuch reputable perſons as in Europe.

LETTER

LETTER XIX.

To the Viſcount de Souillac, Governor of the Iſland of Bourbon.

On board the Favori, in the Road of St. Denis, 30th *Nov.* 1778.

A CAPTIVE ſtranger, the ſubject of a ſtate in hoſtility with your nation, Sir, enjoys, with the higheſt ſatisfaction, the amiable report which flows from the gratitude of a people bleſt with the ſweets of juſtice, of your mild and equitable adminiſtration. Why a neighbouring iſland, under the ſame government with Bourbon, ſhould be chaſtiſed with a ſcourge, is a myſtery which will no doubt be unfolded in the courſe of Providence. In the mean time, that ſcourge ſerves as a foil to make your virtues ſhine with greater luſtre.

Receive, Sir, the firſt tribute which the juſtice and humanity of a perſon inveſted with power, has had a right to claim from me ever ſince, by the violation of public and private faith, it was my misfortune to be obliged to ſubmit to the rigours of impriſonment, and the ſeverities of illiberal reſentment. My beſt thanks are the only acknowledgments I can offer, for the indulgence which you, Sir, have thought proper to grant to my companion and myſelf, of occupying an apartment in town, under the authority of a ſerjeant, for the benefit of freſh air, and for

recovery from a malady which knows no other cure. The time fixed for the ſhip's departure is now near at hand, and one or two days on ſhore would not compenſate for the trouble of providing ſuch an apartment as might be fit for us, and other inconveniencies that would attend our leaving this place of confinement: for having diſcovered that M. de la Brillane had retracted his promiſe to M. Launay, of indulging me with a reſidence on ſhore, until I ſhould be in a condition to embark for Europe, I ſent away every thing I had, that was not adapted to a veſſel not remarkable for cleanlineſs, or any kind of elegance. If I have the good fortune to ſurvive this voyage, I ſhall carry to your country, Sir, and to my own, a heart impreſſed with the character of the Viſcount de Souillac, and as ready to do juſtice to the virtues of the public enemies of my country, as to complain of the injuries I have ſuffered from their injuſtice.

I have the honour to be, &c. &c.

LETTER XX.

To Mrs. —— ——.

At Sea, lat. 32. *S. long.* 31. *E. from Paris, in the Favori,* 5th *January,* 1779.

A SHIP approaches, my dear Madam, which may prove the happy means of releaſing me from a ſtate of perfect wretchedneſs. The ſea-

ſcurvy,

ſcurvy, a return of my fever, together with many diſagreeable circumſtances, would certainly overpower my weak frame, were I forced to continue my voyage in the Favori. Yet, believe the dictates of my heart, it is not without regret that I quit this ſickly and inconvenient manſion, which would have wafted me to France, and Britain, and reſtored me to thoſe objects which I hold the deareſt in the world, and which are ever preſent to my mind amidſt all the cares and diſquietudes of an uneaſy life.

You, my friend, know the ſtate of my mind full as well as I do myſelf: for to you I have unboſomed my whole heart. You know the objects of friendly attachment that occupy and deſerve my conſtant attention. Have the goodneſs, my dear couſin, to communicate to one of thoſe much-favoured perſons, the unexpected events which have happened to me, and which will ſerve to explain ſome things which might otherwiſe create uneaſineſs.

I wrote a long letter to you from the Iſle of France, dated the 7th of November. From that letter you will have learnt what happened to me ſince the arrival of the Briſſon in the road of Pondicherry. Nothing very material has occurred ſince. I embarked on board this ſhip at the Iſle of France the 15th of November, and ſailed from Bourbon on the 10th of December. I am now placed in a ſociety not unlike that of the ſtage coach in Tom Jones; a jumble of figures, conſtitutions, complexions, diſpoſitions, profeſſions, and ſexes. I ſhall endeavour to give you an idea of ſome of the principal characters in this

catalogue;

catalogue; and it would be a breach of good-manners, not to preſent our captain to you in the firſt place, Le Sieur Deniel. It will be difficult to deſcribe the peculiarities, or rather the contrarieties of this animal. He is pretty far advanced in the decline of life, a great hypocrite, and a greater bigot. He has long indulged himſelf in the beaſtly habit of ſolitary drunkenneſs. The firſt part of each morning he devotes to the offenſive operation of diſgorging the fermented wine, arrack, garlick, and ragouts of the preceding day: the ſecond to prayer, or more properly the profanation of religion; and the reſt to gluttony and intoxication. Equally unqualified for the functions of a maſter and thoſe of an officer of a ſhip, he affects with an old Davis's quadrant, to obſerve the ſun's altitude at noon, and pirates from one or other of his officers the latitude. Sometimes he ſits down at table to dinner, but he ſuddenly diſappears, like a thief, ſtealing away a full plate and a bottle, to indulge his appetite without reſtraint in his bed-ſty, where he keeps, for private conveniency, a quantity of wine and ſpirits. By the hour of two he is ſtupid and turns in to his neſt; at four he has recourſe to his bottle, and a plate of cold victuals and garlic in his own cabin; on the ſtrength of which he ſtaggers forth with an air of authority to profane the duties of religion; to exhibit an example of human frailty; and to remind his paſſengers of the great perils to which they are expoſed under the conduct of ſuch a guide over the ocean.

The

The two principal officers of the ſhip, who are natives of St. Maloes, are good ſenſible men, and ſufficiently polite. A M. L——c of L'Orient, (who works his paſſage home in the character of third officer) is a weak, vain, conceited, ignorant, vulgar fellow, without education or manners, and impudently familiar. He will probably avail himſelf of my name to viſit you. I told him that you were viſible only to perſons who had reſpectable introductions, or on buſineſs. Our ſurgeon is a ſecond edition of the captain; with this difference, that the want of means keeps him from being ſo often drunk, and obliges him to amuſe himſelf, in the intervals between gormandizing and drinking, by mending of old ſtockings. The Abbé Fontaine, one of my fellow-paſſengers, does honour to his cloth. Nature has given him a good countenance and perſon, as well as a noble genius, which is highly improved by a liberal education. His deportment, which is perfectly free from unneceſſary reſerve and troubleſome affectation, is at the ſame time ſcrupulouſly regulated by that decency which becomes an eccleſiaſtic. He poſſeſſes language, abilities, and addreſs, which might qualify him to preſide even in a ſociety of Jeſuits. He has that dignity of manner, which is the natural concomitant of conſcious merit, and which the French call l'amour propre; but which, in few men only, would not be denominated arrogance. Were I to meet the Abbé Fontaine in China, Pruſſia, or England, out of the clerical garb, I ſhould conclude that he had formerly occupied an important ſtation in that learned,

learned, perſevering ſociety of proſcribed prieſts, who once governed the cabinets and conſciences of powerful monarchs, but whoſe influence, grown too great to bear controul, wrecked them on the dangerous rocks of ambition.

A longer acquaintance than I have had with Monſieur de la Combe, the late procureur du Roy in the iſland of Bourbon, would be neceſſary to anatomize this honeſt oddity. Nature has been unkind to his external form, and but ſparing in her intellectual endowments; but ſhe has adorned this homely and crazy manſion with ſome juſt and generous ſentiments, an ample recompence for all defects. I ſhould ſuppoſe that he has been going down the vale of life theſe fifteen years. He is ſomewhat above the ſize of an ordinary dwarf, and his limbs are diſtorted. He is polite and ceremonious even to exceſs; yet he is alſo peeviſh, rude, haſty, and in converſation blunt and ſarcaſtical. Brought up to the profeſſion of the law, without the advantage of genius, by the mere dint of application, he has acquired a practical knowledge of forms and rules; and a natural deſire to do juſtice ſets him far above all chicane. This knowledge of the practice of the law, and this innate love of equity, have inclined and enabled him to reſiſt the imperious hand of oppreſſion in ſupport of innocence, though at the hazard of his appointment, and conſequently his bread, under an arbitrary and unprincipled government. He feels for the diſtreſſes of others, and relieves them to the full extent of his power. He is liberal and candid in the higheſt degree, and far above all local or national

national prejudices. With all theſe virtues, he labours under the misfortune of being obliged to wear the petticoat. He feels his degradation, without daring to aſſert his prerogative by boldly reſuming the breeches; for M. and Madame de la C——e are ſuch perfect contraſts in reſpect of ſize, that while the petticoat may ſerve as a cloak to ſhelter the huſband from the crown of his head to the ſoles of his feet, the breeches would be incompetent to ſupply the place of a pair of gloves to his ſtupendous mate. Thus, while in the cauſe of others he is bold and reſolute, in his own he is timid and paſſive.

You know, my fair friend, that I am generally tender of the characters of the amiable ſex, except where I have an opportunity of conveying my ſentiments verbally to a real confident. Of the procureur's help-mate I ſhall only ſay, that ſhe is vulgar, and a dram-ſipper; and I am ſure, if ſhe could be otherwiſe, ſhe would not be continent. They have two children on board, the one is ſpoiled by the father; becauſe, from ſome features in his countenance, he concludes that he is really his own ſon: the other is ſpoiled by the mother, for reaſons beſt known to herſelf as the true mother of the child.

Our fourth companion, Monſieur Kerbalanec, a merchant of the Iſle of France, and a native of Bretagne, is a cautious, prudent, cool, civil Frenchman, having as well the phlegm as the figure of a Dutchman. He is vain of his family, capacity, and education. The root may be very old, but the branch is nothing extraordinary. He ſeems ever attentive to his own intereſt; but as the

the ſame time poſſeſſes juſt and honourable principles, and is worthy of mercantile and ſocial confidence, His health is bad, and I dread, that without a quick paſſage from the Cape, he will fall a ſacrifice to a bad habit and the ſea-ſcurvy. His lady, during his abſence, has reſided chiefly with his ſiſter, Madame Henri, of L'Orient; and if the ſtate of the war and his private affairs will allow, he means to return to the Eaſt.

During the time we lay at anchor in Bourbon, not having leave to land, we were viſited by ſome company on ſhip-board; and amongſt others, by a lady who is niece to one of your nuns, Madame G——d. She and her huſband, Mr. Bertrand, preſſed on me the two incloſed letters. I have been treated with every mark of reſpect and attention: ſometimes I am taken for a powerful member of the ſupreme council of India; ſometimes for an officer of diſtinction; and at others, for a nobleman inveſted with high powers from the court of London. And it has been with difficulty that I could perſuade ſome people that I had not loſt, on board the Briſſon, in money and effects, 30,000l. ſterling. I hope to write to you ſoon from the Cape.

Adieu.

LETTER XXI.

At Sea, on board the ſhip Favori,
14th *January*, 1779.

AT length, my fair couſin, I have effected my enlargement, and within the ſpace of an hour I ſhall embark in a Daniſh ſhip bound directly

rectly for the Cape of Good Hope. This deſirable object I attained not without difficulty. I met with ſuch an oppoſition from captain Deniel, as had nearly blaſted all my hopes of deliverance from this floating priſon; and which, of courſe, threatened to limit my life to a very few weeks or days, as I had for ſome time been alarmed with dangerous ſymptoms of the ſea-ſcurvy. A certain degree of firmneſs and management was neceſſary to overcome the obſtinacy of that drunken blockhead, and the conceit of Monſieur de la Combe. My honeſt fellow-ſufferer, the Reverend Mr. Y—e, was ſilent and paſſive, ready to adopt any meaſure which I ſhould approve. I do not know that I ever, in my life, practiſed argument and addreſs with ſuch effect as I did on this occaſion: but it was neck or nothing. When I firſt ſpoke to the captain on the ſubject of my enlargement, he declared that it was more than his life was worth; that I was committed to him as a priſoner, and enrolled as ſuch in the diſpatches both at Mauritius and Bourbon; and that he had received orders not to touch at the Cape on account of his priſoners. I aſked him, if I had not paid for my paſſage?—"Yes, Sir." "Have I not conſequently the ſame privileges that other paſſengers have?" "Aſſuredly, Sir."—"If any of the French gentlemen choſe to quit your ſhip, and to releaſe you from refunding any part of the paſſage-money; would you, or could you, prevent him from doing ſo?" "No, Sir, I believe I could not." Then, having paid for my paſſage, I am not to be conſidered as a priſoner, nor have I committed

committed any crime; therefore, if you dare to detain me on board againſt my conſent, the firſt Engliſh ſhip that comes along ſide, will, when I tell my ſtory, ſeize your ſhip and yourſelf; and if there be no war between France and England, will carry you into ſome Britiſh port to make good any damages: but if there be a war, your uſage of me will undoubtedly, as ſoon as it is known, awaken the reſentment of my countrymen, and diſpoſe them to make ſevere retaliation on you or others, even if I ſhould endeavour to diſſuade them.

Theſe conſiderations had a ſenſible effect on the captain's countenance and language. I immediately improved the advantage I had gained, by telling him, that I would ſtate my caſe, and make my demand in writing, in the form of a letter addreſſed to him, that he might ſummon his officers and paſſengers to a conſultation upon it; and that their determination (ſhould it be favourable to me) being properly recorded and authenticated, would be a juſtification of his conduct, in caſe the ſhip ſhould not be taken before ſhe ſhould arrive in the European ſeas. To this he aſſented: I wrote a very ſtrong letter, urging my claim from the laws of nations, the principles of common juſtice, and the ſtate of my health. The council ſat—the procureur du Roy pleaded, and within leſs than an hour it was unanimouſly decided, that I ought not to be detained on board againſt my inclination; and it was reſolved, that I was at liberty to embark on board any neutral ſhip. I ſhall take leave of the Abbé Fontaine with pain. I am pleaſed and flattered by obſerving,

ing, that this excellent perſon thinks on our approaching ſeparation with regret. When he received me on the gangway, on my return from on board the Daniſh ſhip, his eyes diſcovered how largely I had ſhared in his affections. — "I ſee, ſaid he, by your countenance, that you have ſucceeded with the Dane." Madame de la Combe ſhed tears, and her two children cried. I was not ſurpriſed that the children did, becauſe I ſhewed an attachment to them, and often fed them.

I had a ſmart oppoſition to encounter on board the Daniſh veſſel, which originated from that ſtrict neutrality ſhe was inſtructed to obſerve. It was with difficulty that I obtained leave to go on board, even as a viſitant. Had I not had the good fortune to meet with a very ſenſible and liberal perſon in Mr. B——d, who was ſupercargo, and alſo one of the owners of the ſhip, my arguments from treaties, laws, and cuſtoms, would have had but little influence on the mind of my other countryman the captain.

The ſecond officer, a real Dane, accompanied me back to dine in the Favori. We ſhall take leave of this ſhip immediately, as the deſſert is ſerved, and the coffee with its chaſſeur ordered quickly, to gratify my deſire of enlargement.

My next letter will be from the country of Mynheers and Hottentots. Adieu, my dear couſin—may God continue to guide your thoughts, words, and actions!

LETTER

LETTER XXII.

The Honourable W. H——s, Eſq. Governor General, &c. &c. in Calcutta.

In the Town Priſon of Port Lewis, Iſle of France, 17th November, 1778.

WE arrived in Pondicherry road on the 5th of Auguſt. The papers that accompany this letter will give you an idea of the treatment which Mr. Y—e and myſelf received, from that time until now. What might have been improper to have mentioned in thoſe papers, I ſhall now take the liberty of laying before you.

It ſeems evident that France had long meditated a blow in the Eaſt, and that it was the prompt and vigorous meaſures adopted, on your part, Sir, which alone prevented it. Some time before my departure from France, in the month of January laſt, the Conſolante frigate brought ſecret intimation that a treaty was concluded with Hyder Ally by M. St. Lubin, the French miniſter, hoſtile to the Nabob of Arcot and the Engliſh Eaſt-India Company, to which the Rajah of Tanjore had alſo acceded. We arrived at Bourbon on the 23d of June. Here ſeveral circumſtances concurred to impreſs our minds with an idea, that either hoſtilities had already been begun by the French in India, or that a rupture would ſoon happen, in which they would be the aggreſſors. The captain of the port declared that he came

came on board under the ſtrongeſt apprehenſions that the Briſſon was an Engliſh man of war, which might carry him priſoner to India. Here M. de Cheſeaux, commander of our ſhip, to our great aſtoniſhment, exhibited to the Governor of Bourbon poſitive orders from the Commiſſary of L'Orient, not to ſuffer the two Engliſh paſſengers to land; and it appeared, farther, that he had obliged himſelf, by writing, to obey that injunction. A gentleman at St. Paul's had the candour to tell me, that if he ſhould take charge of my letters for France, to be ſent by the ſhip Fitz-James, then hourly expected, he might be called upon to produce them. Dr. C——n who brought ſome letters to Mr. Y—e for his friends in Bengal, delivered them into his hands open; for it was probable, he ſaid, that all papers would undergo an examination at Pondicherry. One of our French paſſengers, who was an utter ſtranger in India, told me, that before he left France, he was aſſured of a military commiſſion in the ſervice of an Indian prince in alliance with France. And it was aſſerted as a fact at Bourbon that the Sartine, commanded by M. Coronat, with all her ſtores and ammunition, were ſold to Hyder Ally.

I know not whether I ought to mention that M. Bellecombe and his officers were, or pretended to be, well acquainted with the moſt ſecret reſolutions in the ſupreme council of Bengal; thoſe in the council of Madras; and with all the intimations, orders, and news that came by the packets from Suez. They ſay, that the Governor General had twice proteſted in council againſt hoſtilities,

hoſtilities, but that Mr. Barwell, who hated the French nation, was violent, and obtained a majority in oppoſition to the governor's ſentiments; that Governor Rumbold, General Munro, and Commodore Sir Edward Vernon, had in like manner entered their proteſt againſt the orders of the ſupreme council, for beſieging Pondicherry; that the houſe of M. Guinett, a French ſurgeon in the Black Town, is a receptacle of ſpies; that if Pondicherry ſhall be reduced, a M. Moracin is to reſide in Sadras, and a M. de Larche in Madras, and that through them all intelligence is to paſs. M. de Larche is a native of India, and will not, they ſay, be conſidered as a French ſubject. It is certain that there are, or were, very active and well-informed ſpies lurking in all the Engliſh ſettlements.

I think it right to acquaint you, that there is a ſcheme in agitation, which, as ſoon as the Flamand ſhall be refitted, will probably be executed. It is intended to take poſſeſſion of the ſmall iſland of Mambaze, in latitude 4° South, on the Eaſt coaſt of Africa. The Portugueſe were driven from this iſland by the Arabians. It will be exceedingly convenient for French traders, as a place of refreſhment; it will be of great advantage in the negro, ivory, amber, and gold trade, and for carrying on a commerce with the Red Sea. It is needleſs to take notice how much ſuch an eſtabliſhment would be injurious to the Engliſh commerce in the Arabian gulph, as well as to our navigation through the channel of Moſambique. I refer you for an account of the preſent ſtate of theſe iſlands to the encloſed papers.

pers. I expect to find an opportunity of conveying this letter from Bourbon to the Cape of Good Hope, where I ſhall write a poſtſcript.

LETTER XXIII.

To ——— ———, Eſqrs. London.

Cape of Good Hope, 1ſt *Feb.* 1779.

MY DEAR FRIENDS,

ON the 15th of January I embarked in a Daniſh ſnow, which came to anchor here on the 22d. The hiſtory of my impriſonment and correſpondence with perſons of various deſcriptions, could not be given in a ſingle letter without infinite time and labour. I therefore refer you, for many particulars, ſome of which you may think not unimportant, to copies of letters I wrote to different perſons on former occaſions.

The French adminiſtration certainly aim at recovering their former influence, and extending their commerce, in Hindoſtan; a reſolution from which nothing can divert them, but the conqueſt of their African iſlands. The Company and the Britiſh government cannot, therefore, be too quick and active in concerting the means for attaining this end. Should the reduction of the French ſettlements in theſe ſeas, become an object to the government of Great Britain, I would furniſh ſeveral obſervations which might be of uſe in making ſuch arrange-

ments in thoſe iſlands, as would contribute at the ſame time to the ſatisfaction of the inhabitants, the advantage of the company, and the intereſt of the Britiſh nation.

At length Pondicherry is reduced, after a brave reſiſtance by an handful of men, defended in many places only by new mud walls. I am not a military man, nor do I pretend to military ſkill: but in warm, and indeed in all remote countries, whatever be their climate, the ſlow approaches practiſed in Europe againſt regular fortifications, are extremely injudicious; the number of men loſt in a general ſtorm, being always far ſhort of the multitudes deſtroyed by bad nouriſhment, inclemency of weather, and continual ſkirmiſhes in a long ſiege: beſides, that delays ever diſcourage the beſiegers, and give confidence to the beſieged. To theſe conſiderations may be added, the riſque incurred, in ſlow approaches, of being obliged to raiſe the ſiege; a neceſſity to which the Engliſh army, before Pondicherry, might have been reduced, if relief had been ſent to the garriſon of that town, either from Hyder Ally or from Europe. I anxiouſly wiſhed to be on ſhore, becauſe, having learned the ſtate of the place beſieged, I could have given uſeful information to thoſe who beſieged it; and particularly could have pointed out two places where aſſaults (feints in the mean time being made in others) would have ſo divided the ſmall force that defended Pondicherry, that it muſt ſoon have been obliged to ſurrender.

I think

I think I do no diſſervice to the Eaſt India Company, when I declare to you, gentlemen, that in my humble opinion, conſequences the moſt dangerous to the Britiſh commerce in Aſia, are to be dreaded from the public and private inſults that are offered with impunity to the Nabob of the Carnatic. The French, Dutch, and Danes, are well informed of the indignities that prince ſuffers within his own dominions, from attornies, private merchants, and even his own military officers. Can a prince, within his own territories, be legally ſued for debts by common actions? or, is it conſiſtent with good policy, and the dignity of ſo reſpectable a body corporate as the Engliſh Eaſt India Company, to ſuffer a common attorney of the mayor's court, to write inſolent and menacing letters to the ſovereign lord of the Carnatic, of whom the Company hold many of their poſſeſſions? Would the Nabob's own officers in the town of Madras ſtop the young Nabob's carriage, perſonally abuſe him with the moſt ſcurrilous language, and even threaten to ſtrike him, if a wiſe and juſt government were eſtabliſhed in that preſidency? Let us recollect, that the young prince, who was thus inſulted, is general of all his father's forces: And is the preſent a time to deſtroy that mutual confidence and eſteem which ought ever to ſubſiſt between a general and his troops, and without which, victory over a foreign enemy is ſacrificed to internal miſtruſt and diſſentions?—A mind, in the vigour of youth, is not always proof againſt repeated inſults, even in countries where princes are regarded not as demi-gods, but as

men, by their ſubjects; and where ſtate and pomp do not, as in Aſia, conſtitute the ſecurity and ſtrength of government. How mortifying then muſt it be to a prince, bending under the weight of years, his treaſures, body and mind, exhauſted in the defence of his country and ſervice of his allies, inſtead of receiving Aſiatic veneration, to be treated with contempt? Such a degradation is infinitely more painful to a feeling, elevated, and princely mind, than death. In ſupporting this weight of affliction ſo long, the Nabob has exhibited fortitude almoſt more than human. Time will diſcloſe to the Eaſt India Company, the qualities of that prince, and diſcover alſo, perhaps when it is too late, how groſsly they have been abuſed by miſrepreſentations of facts and circumſtances. After ſo old, ſo firm, ſo approved an alliance, the ſyſtem of expediency now adopted, is indelicate, and new experiments may prove dangerous.—In the mean time, it would be good policy in the company to concert with the old prince the choice of his ſucceſſor: a meaſure that may be neceſſary to prevent civil or family controverſies at a time when diſunion and diffidence, or even delays or incapacity, might ſuggeſt dangerous ideas, and ſtir up foreign commotions on the coaſt of Coromandel.—Hereditary right is not limited in Aſia, as in Europe, to ſeniority. It is, in many caſes, thought enough, that dominion paſs into the hands of one of the family to whom it originally belonged.

I offer theſe ſentiments with freedom, being fully perſuaded that they are juſt. I have learned

ed them from much converſation with well-informed foreigners; and am convinced of their propriety, from a knowledge of the political and commercial views of the rivals and enemies of the Britiſh nation.—I wiſh the Company knew how feelingly the French lament the original error of Monſieur Dupleix, in not having formed a connection with Mahomed-Ali-Cawn, rather than with pretenders and uſurpers. A knowledge of this fact, would enhance the merit of the Nabob, and ſtrengthen their attachment to his perſon and family.

Adieu.

LETTER XXIV.

To J—— M——, Eſq; London.

Cape of Good Hope, 10th *Feb.* 1779.

MY DEAR SIR,

HAVING unexpectedly become confidentially acquainted with perſons of ſome rank here, I am confirmed in notions I had long entertained of your neighbours of the amphibious kind, which I ſhall take the opportunity that now offers, of communicating to you.

It is ſome years ſince I could clearly perceive that Amſterdam leaned unnaturally towards France, againſt Britain. Rotterdam, the Hague, and

and the other towns of Holland, are otherwiſe diſpoſed; but the influence of Amſterdam is great, and the Dutch Eaſt-India Company have very inconſiderately thrown their weight into the ſame ſcale. The broils with America, which Holland has warmly promoted, together with French intrigues, have ſet Dutch politics in motion for ſome time paſt: and I can aſſure you, that the Superior of this eſtabliſhment has declared, in confidence, "that the States will endeavour to keep a neutrality between the contending parties; but, if forced to depart from that ſyſtem, that they will declare for France." To the perſons from whom I had this intelligence, I gave it as my opinion, that both the French and Engliſh nations would concur in the ſame meaſure, not to allow Holland "to milch the cow," as ſhe did laſt war. I took the liberty of adding, that the people of that renowned republic, had ſtrangely renounced thoſe ſound maxims of policy which had formerly directed their public conduct. I ſhall give you the ſubſtance of the political lectures I have been occaſionally giving to the Dutch at this place, ſince my arrival hither. The rivalſhip of England, I repreſented, was not likely to produce any new diſadvantages to the Dutch, unleſs they themſelves ſhould wantonly provoke them: whereas France, with greater advantages than England poſſeſſed, ariſing from local and other circumſtances, was bending all her efforts, not only to ſecure the means of being the manufacturer and carrier of her own wants and luxuries, but alſo of participating largely in the commerce and navigation of other nations; that the French nation,

nation, even to a man, deteſted a Dutchman, becauſe his perſon, ideas, manners, religion, and the civil conſtitution of his country, were all of them diametrically oppoſite to their own; that they would give no more of their confidence to the Dutch, than policy and intrigue rendered neceſſary during the period in which they were driving their own points; an inſincerity of conduct ſimilar to that which they themſelves, in ſpite of the abilities and philoſophy of Dr. Franklin, were one day to experience in the Americans.—I declared, what I knew to be truth, that the French had ſucceſsfully raiſed the true cinnamon, cloves, mace, and nutmegs, in the iſle of Mauritius *; and had ſent plants to Cayenne, all ſtolen from Ceylon, Amboyna, and Banda. Such were the happy effects of Dutch partiality and French treachery! I urged, farther, the vaſt ſums which Holland had entruſted in the Engliſh funds; and could not imagine they would break through that bond of attachment, if a total change ſhould not take place in their very natures, if they ſhould not become completely mad. While open war or ſecret jealouſies ſubſiſted between the houſes of Auſtria and Brandenburgh, France could never penetrate into Holland; whereas every port, conſequently the whole trade and navy of Holland, would be expoſed to the naval power of Great Britain, &c. &c.

What effect my political lectures will have on the minds of my Dutch friends, I do not know. I ſuſ-

* It was ſuppoſed that there would be ſhipped home this year, from the King's garden alone, 10,000 lb. weight of cinnamon, 20,000 lb. weight of cloves, beſides conſiderable quantities of other ſpices.

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pect that it will be much the ſame with that which is commonly produced by lectures in morality and theology. But while I foreſee the part the Hollanders will probably take in that conteſt which is likely to diſturb the world, I have the ſatisfaction of being convinced, that they are not thoſe formidable enemies they are commonly imagined to be; and that, ſhould they venture on war, they will ſoon repent of their raſhneſs, and wiſh for nothing ſo much as for peace with England.

You may be aſſured, my friend, that there is not a government on earth which, with ſo much art and ſucceſs, conceals from public view, and in ſome meaſure even from itſelf, the dangerous precipice over which it is ſuſpended, as the High and Mighty States of Holland. When it falls, as it muſt do, poſterity will be loſt in enquiring into the circumſtances which ſerved ſo long as props to the baſeleſs fabric.

It is well known, that of all the branches of Dutch commerce, that with India has ever been conſidered, both by themſelves and foreign nations, as the chief. It was this that enabled them to contend with ſucceſs againſt Philip II. and Philip III. of Spain, the moſt powerful monarchs of the age in which they lived. The gold of the weſtern world, and the renown of the Spaniſh name, were oppoſed in vain to the rich productions of the Eaſt, and the perſevering induſtry of an infant republic, contending for religious and civil liberty.

That branch of commerce which firſt exalted them, the Dutch nation ſtill regard as the chief

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ſource of their wealth. It is this that is the grand ſupport of their hope and their pride. They well know, that in an enlightened age they cannot enjoy thoſe advantages which in times of obſcurity they derived from prudence, perſeverance, and reſolution; and above all, from neceſſity, the mother of invention; and diſtreſs, the parent of virtue. The nations of Europe do, many of them, manufacture or import thoſe articles themſelves, with which they were formerly ſupplied from Holland. The rocks of St. Euſtatius and Saba, and the ſand-bank Curacoa, are adapted only to the clandeſtine trade to which they have been made ſubſervient, againſt the faith of nations and of men. Their ſettlements between the Oronooke and the Amazon, on the continent of South America, have, by a conduct unworthy of the deſcendants of thoſe who fought for religion, liberty, and juſtice, under the banners of the firſt William Prince of Orange, fallen into a diſcredit, which, added to the expenſive labour of draining and clearing the land, the maintenance of ſubordination among ſlaves on a continent, and that unhealthfulneſs of climate which has proved fatal to procreation, threatens the decline of this once promiſing colony. It is to Aſia alone that the Dutch look, with fond hopes of drawing the means of private and public proſperity. But when the famed eſtabliſhments of the Dutch in the Eaſt are ſtripped of their falſe glare and external ornaments, a poor emaciated body appears, with all the ſymptoms of a galloping conſumption. Their Eaſt-India trade has elevated them into an air too fine for the reſpiration

tion of ſuch heavy bodies, and threatens to hurl them back into their original moraſs.

The numerous commercial eſtabliſhments and colonies of Holland in the Eaſtern hemiſphere, were wreſted from the Portugueſe by treachery and force of arms; or uſurped from the native proprietors by aſſaſſinations, perfidy, and oppreſſion: the ſettlement at the Cape of Good Hope, alone is an exception, which the juſtice of a ſurgeon purchaſed from the Hottentots for about 4,000l. in merchandize. The Engliſh Eaſt-India Company, among others, were obliged to ſubmit to acts of barbarity from thoſe avaricious uſurpers, which give them at this moment a right to revive a dormant claim on ſome of their moſt valuable ſpice-ſettlements. I ſhall, perhaps, hereafter ſhew the practicability of laying open the ſpice-trade to other nations as well as the Dutch, and demonſtrate the peculiar advantages that would thence accrue to the Britiſh nation and Engliſh Eaſt-India Company. At preſent I ſhall content myſelf with ſtating the profits which ariſe from the ſpice-trade alone, and ſhew, notwithſtanding, the declining ſtate both of the Dutch nation and Eaſt-India Company *.

Upon the whole, the republic of Holland, that famous ſtructure which excited the admiration and jealouſy of Europe, has been undermined by its own degenerate offſpring. That power which ſet limits to the ſea, and even invaded her bounds, will ſpeedily vaniſh like a viſion. It is ſaid, that one evident ſymptom of

* The calculation which was here introduced, the reader will find in the firſt page of the Appendix, under letter A.

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conſumptive conſtitution, is an inſenſibility of s declining ſtate. This is exactly the caſe of Holland: a people who underſtand the rules of alculation, the principles of politics, the nature f commerce, and the various ſprings which ive vigour and permanency to all other powers n Europe, cannot, or will not, behold their own apid declenſion.

So rapacious is the avarice, and unbounded he ambition of this Republic, that ſhe ſecretly abours to deſtroy an old and faithful ally, regardleſs of that certain deſtruction to herſelf, which muſt flow from ſo ſtrange a conduct. Whether Great Britain ſhould have a proſperous or n unfortunate iſſue out of her preſent troubles, who can tell? But this we may predict, with a conſiderable degree of certainty, that if Holland ſhould declare againſt England, ſhe would thereby only haſten her own deſtruction. Before England becomes bankrupt, Holland will be ruined. England has reſources which will enable her to emerge from a ſea of troubles; whereas Holland, with all the qualities of an amphibious animal, once immerged, will never riſe again. To aggravate her misfortunes, they will be of her own ſeeking, and ſhe will fall, unpitied and unlamented. What would appear venial in the conduct of other nations, in that of Holland will be thought unpardonable. Impatient of tyranny, the founders of that Republic reſiſted the oppreſſive power of Spain, with a ſpirit and perſeverance which adorned human nature, and which could have been inſpired only by a regard to religion, and a love of freedom and juſtice.—Their degenerate offſpring,

offspring, without a ſhadow of provocation, exerciſe on others ſuch oppreſſions as thoſe againſt which their brave anceſtors took up arms with glorious ſucceſs: and the impartial tribunal of the Omnipotent is likely to diſplay its juſtice, by making that avarice and ambition which were the ſource of their crimes, the means of their deſtruction.

The vain, pompous, and ridiculous ſtate diſplayed by the Dutch Eaſt-India Company in Batavia, together with thoſe numerous governments by which they maintain their oppreſſions, has not only diveſted the directors in Europe of their conſtitutional authority, and transferred it to their ſervants in Aſia, the mighty lords of their own creation; but has devoured, or diverted into private channels, that gain which ariſes from their uſurpation, but which might have been obtained by means leſs oppreſſive, and more conſonant to juſtice.

From thoſe ideas of imaginary power, influence, and wealth, expected from the trade with India, proceeded, firſt the neglect, and then the entire abolition of manufactures, which, in an artificial country like Holland, is the only ſource of population. The ſame falſe ideas have introduced luxury, and a ſpecies of mixed affectation, partaking of the frivolity of the airy Frenchman, and the auſtere, haughty reſerve of the free-born Engliſh. From theſe two fatal cauſes, the introduction of luxury, and the decay of manufactures, the United Provinces have been gradually depopulated, and the principles of their inhabitants have greatly degenerated. Indolence and

pleaſure,

aſure, the parents of idleneſs and corruption, ve undermined the foundations of a republic ich was founded on induſtry, temperance, and gality.

The population and wealth of this celebrated ublic, are now almoſt wholly confined within e gates of two cities: I mean Amſterdam and tterdam. The ſtanding army of the States neral, in times of profound peace, conſiſting 38,000 effectives, contain not in that number oo natives. The navigation of the republic carried on by a number of ſeamen, of which ree-fourths are foreigners. Her navy conſiſts of ſhips of war, in good condition, which lie in veral different ports, creating daily expences, king the intereſt of their capital, and the capi- itſelf by degrees.

But notwithſtanding this apparently formida- navy, it has been found impracticable to man fifty-gun ſhip within ſhorter time than four onths, even in times of peace, with all the en- avours of the ableſt and moſt active officer in e ſervice of the States *; and when ſhe went ſea, out of about 450 reputed ſeamen, the ptain and his officers could not muſter twenty- ve men capable of actual duty. Mercenaries e a temporary, but precarious aid, having no ttlements in the country they ſerve, no families, attachments: and whoſe pecuniary acquiſiti- ns, like a balance of trade, tend ultimately to npoveriſh the ſtate in which they have been ac- uired, and to enrich thoſe to which they are

* Captain May, an Engliſhman, whoſe ſervice in Holland is a real loſs, a two-fold ſenſe, to his native country, which he ſincerely loves.

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tranſported. It may be aſked, of what mighty advantage is their extenſive navy to the United Provinces, without ſeamen on whom they can depend, and without a poſſibility of arming a ſhip of the line in any port of Holland? From Amſterdam, their great port, a ſhip of war muſt be conducted out of the harbour without maſts, ſails, rigging, guns, ſtores, proviſions, or even ballaſt, being buoyed by a machine which they call a camel. Thus expoſed, might not the port of Amſterdam, wherein near half the navy of Holland is equipped, and which is the mart of four-fifths of its whole trade, be ſhut up by two light frigates? And if ſo, how much is the Dutch nation at the mercy of Britain?

The boaſted wealth of Holland is univerſally miſconceived, and in a great meaſure imaginary. Her extenſive trade is carried on by a circulation, whereof credit is the baſis; and that credit is founded on a tenure more vague than even its Eaſtern ſpeculations, becauſe it is blended with the proſperity and honour of other nations, and becauſe the Republic wants power to enforce its claims, in caſe of any delinquency ariſing from injuſtice, caprice or neceſſity.

The decline of manufactures has thrown the whole command of the wealth of this country into the judaic hands of ſubtle brokers of Amſterdam. Theſe men conſpire with negociators to promote their mutual advantage, at the expence of their ignorant, and often miſled, country conſtituents, by over-rating the value, and enhancing the price of ſecurities, over and above their eſtabliſhed commiſſions.

The

The general and particular ſtates and corporations of the United Provinces, have contracted debts equal to eighty millions of Britiſh pounds, at a very low rate of intereſt. Foreign nations have contracted debts in Holland nearly equal, (including the property which the Dutch poſſeſs in the Britiſh ſtocks) for which they pay a higher rate of intereſt. Theſe two ſums are the imaginary property of the individual ſubjects of the Republic, except ſuch ſums as they have negociated in Antwerp, and other neighbouring towns and ſtates in Germany, which by right ſhould be deducted out of the calculation. The difference between the intereſt paid by the general and particular ſtates of the United Provinces, and that which is paid to them by foreigners, is the fund whereon the people ſubſiſt; the profits and commiſſions of merchants and brokers being ingroſſed by a few individuals; and agriculture not being ſufficient to furniſh bread and animal food to a ſixth part of the inhabitants. On the foundation of thoſe loans, and the negociation of actions, or obligations circulated from hand to hand as articles of commerce, are the vaſt ſpeculations of the mercantile, calculating geniuſes of Holland formed. The ſpecies of gold, ſilver and copper in the country, cannot amount to ten millions ſterling: the annual circulation may be computed, moderately, to be three hundred millions ſterling, excluſive of nominal ſtock-jobbing; that is, the entire coinage circulates in idea thirty times in every year. The coins of intrinſic value are not current by legal tale; and thoſe that are legally current by tale, bear not any juſt proportion to

their

their current value; ſuch is the baſe quality of their ſilver and copper coins. Hence it happens, that thoſe of real value become articles of commerce, fluctuating in their value, and liable not only to mutilation, but to tranſportation to other countries. They are therefore often re-coined, to the certain detriment of the country on which that loſs muſt ultimately fall, which ariſes from clipping, milling, and common wear. But this is a ſpecies of policy favourable to circulation, and more ſo to the bank of Amſterdam, whoſe directors, the city magiſtrates, have contrived a municipal law, by which all foreign bills of exchange are paid in the bank; whereas all demands on the bank are negociable only by transfers: a ſyſtem which multiplies circulation, extends the influence of the bank, and artfully conceals the application of the funds, which the credulous part of the world are taught to believe to be idly immured within the ſtupendous walls of the ſtadthouſe. That muſt be allowed to be a myſterious influence indeed, which can add in an inſtant from four to five per cent. to the value of money lodged in that fabric; which the ſame money could never be made to acquire in any other place, not in the ſtrongeſt repoſitories, and under the moſt watchful guards that can be conceived by human imagination.—To penetrate the art by which ſuch an influence is to be acquired, would doubtleſs be a diſcovery equal to that of the phyloſopher's ſtone *.

The wealth and ſecurity of Holland being thus dependent on the proſperity of all the ſtates in

* This magical increaſe of value, they call the agio of the bank.

Europe,

Europe who have borrowed her treaſures, it is evidently her intereſt to be the conſtant mediator of peace. In behalf of Britain, eſpecially, ſhe ſhould exert every nerve, becauſe at leaſt two thirds of all her foreign loans are ſecured on the credit of that nation: and although ſhe receives a lower rate of intereſt from the Britiſh funds than from the contracts of other nations, ſhe ought to remember that it is the ready circulation which the ſuperior credit of the Britiſh funds alone yield, that gives life and vigour to all her mercantile purſuits. Suppoſe then the Britiſh nation a bankrupt, can the ten millions of actual ſpecie in Holland already veſted, or in circulation, but intrinſically not worth eight millions, ſupport alſo that circulation which aroſe from near fifty millions in the Britiſh funds, or ſecured by Britiſh ſubjects? It is the want of credit alone that can ſhut up, for a time, the reſources of Britain: and that want of credit can only be brought about by Dutch irreſolution, inattention, ingratitude, or a mixture of all three. But if the public credit of Britain be ſhaken, the commercial, and of courſe the public credit of Holland will alſo be ſhaken; ſince the credit of Holland depends on that of Britain. And farther, Britain, from her various reſources, can ſtruggle more effectually and longer with diſcredit than Holland can, where credit is the only ſpring of commerce; therefore Holland muſt fall a ſacrifice to her own perfidy and folly, before ſhe can perpetrate her ungrateful purpoſes on a great nation, who is even now her beſt friend, and natural ally. But what if England, incenſed at

the provoking behaviour of Holland, ſhould, on ſome future occaſion, ſequeſter the property which the ſubjects of that ſtate poſſeſs in the Britiſh funds and corporate ſecurities? The exiſtence of the Republic, as a commercial ſtate, muſt inſtantly come to a final period.—Woe to Amſterdam! infatuated by an unnatural attachment to France, although a bankrupt upon her exchange, her jealouſy, ambition, and ſuperior wealth, domineering over her more moderate and juſt, and leſs envious colleagues in the general States, unhappily for herſelf and for them, guide the reins which precipitate her country, firſt into injuſtice, and then into deſtruction.

I have mentioned ſome, but not all the inſtances in which Holland has impoſed on the eaſy credulity of other nations. Her internal police has hitherto been conducted on the principles of wiſdom and juſtice: but ſhe is in reality as much unacquainted with civil liberty, as ſhe is oppreſſed by taxes. There is not a government in Europe that exerciſes internal tyranny more deſpotically than the magiſtracy of the United Provinces; nor any which exacts ſo great a proportion of private, in order to ſecure public property. But the public revenue, as well as the internal police of Holland, is admirably well conducted. It is levied in a manner worthy of the antient legiſlators of the United Provinces, and ſuitable to that attention which was formerly paid to commerce and mercantile credit, the baſis of the power and reputation of that nation. A deviation from thoſe principles which govern the internal police and public revenues of the Republic,

Republic, would ſoon unite the Harlemermer and the Zuyder ſea, in ſpite of thoſe narrow, unſubſtantial arches which arrogantly labour to keep them aſunder. The ſlimy ſubſtance which the torrents of the Rhine carry into the beds of the canals of Holland, and which of courſe raiſe the waters with which they are filled to greater and greater heights, render it neceſſary to raiſe, in the ſame proportion, the dykes within which they are confined: this will require more ſolid matter than mixed ſtrata of ſand and loam, the remains of turf-pits moſt injudiciouſly exhauſted †. The violence of northern ſtorms daſhing againſt the ſand-dykes which guard the coaſts of Holland; the terrors of a junction between the Maeſe and the Texel, and the Harlem and Zuyder ſeas, will furniſh inceſſant employment for the wealth as well as the vigilance of the Dutch; which, while it will tend to curb their ambition and power, will render them uſeful examples of induſtry and perſeverance to their neighbours.

Before I conclude this letter, the length of which I am afraid has already exhauſted your patience, I muſt mention a fact, which ſhews the declining ſtate of Dutch commerce and power in a manner ſtill more ſtriking than all the foregoing reaſons.

The original eſtabliſhments of the Dutch company in Aſia were ſo conſiderable, and the mortality there ſo great, that they required near-

† The Dutch, to whom the fumes of pit-coal appear equally unhealthy and offenſive, have carried off, for the purpoſe of fuel, that turfy ſoil which ſupplied materials for their old dykes, and in many places nothing is left but ſand.

ly an annual ſupply of five thouſand recruits, to uphold about ſeven thouſand effective Europeans in garriſons at the Cape of Good Hope, Java, Ceylon, the Malabar coaſt, Coromandel coaſt, Bengal, Sumatra, Molucca, Siam, and the Eaſtern and Molucca iſlands. Of late, neceſſity, not a ſpirit of œconomy, or leſs apprehenſion of danger, has forced them to ſubmit to a reduction of their whole European force in Aſia to about three thouſand men, diſtributed in their ſeveral garriſons thus,—at the Cape, under five hundred; Java under one thouſand; Ceylon, about five hundred; the eaſt coaſt of Hindoſtan and Bengal, two hundred and fifty; the Malabar coaſt, about two hundred; the coaſts of Sumatra, Malacca, and Siam, about one hundred and fifty; and the iſlands of Borneo, Celebes, Ternante, Timer, &c. comprehending the Molucca ſpice-iſlands of Banda and Amboyna, about four hundred.

P. S. One of the European ſhips under the direction of Mr. Bolts, arrived here a few days ago from China. She brings accounts, that another veſſel was to follow in the courſe of a month; that Mr. Bolts had been more ſucceſsful in his enterprize than had been expected; and that Hyder Ally Cawn had ceded to the Emperor part of Mangalore. The Portugueſe, according to the report of this ſhip, have offered a territory to his Imperial Majeſty, for the purpoſe of building a town; and Mr. Bolts has eſtabliſhed a colony at Rio de la Goa, on the eaſt coaſt of Africa, not far from the moſt eaſterly Dutch ſettlement in that quarter of the world: but he is to remain

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in India for ſome time longer, and then to return to Europe by Suez. Four of the Engliſh Company's ſhips were to have ſailed the firſt of January. It is added, that all the trading mandarins in Canton had become bankrupts, whereby many Europeans would be great ſufferers. This laſt article of intelligence, as I conceive, is a political manœuvre of the Chineſe, previous to their ſuſpenſion of all European commerce.

LETTER XXV.

To J. M—— Eſq; London.

Cape of Good Hope, 16th *April*, 1779.

THIS is likely to be the laſt letter which you will receive from me before I get to India. A Dutch Mercury (a prodigy!) hath undertaken, for the price of about fifty pounds, to tranſport me hence; if wiſhes could add velocity to the flight of that meſſenger, my paſſage would be a quick one. I am to embark in the ſhip Mercure, Captain Duhne, on the 25th inſtant, for Negapatnam, on the Coromandel coaſt.—I have promiſed a female relation in France, a particular account of my obſervations in this country: She has a genius and underſtanding, which education and a love of reading have improved above the generality of either ſex. I ſhall mingle deſcription with politics; and a copy of what I am to write for her entertainment, will

will carry on this narrative as far as it relates to the Cape of Good Hope.

I am this inſtant returned from accompanying and taking leave of Mr. Daniel Barwell †, who had been captured in the ſhip Oſterly, and is now embarked as paſſenger in one of the Dutch company's ſhips for Holland. I never part with an acquaintance, without feeling the impreſſion of ſocial love, tinctured with melancholy, for ſome time after.—With the fire peculiar to a kindred climate, this young gentleman poſſeſſes a large portion of good ſenſe, ſtrength of memory, diſcernment, and political addreſs; and I doubt not, from my obſervations on his character, that with all his natural warmth of conſtitution and youthful propenſities, he is a friend to truth, to candour, and to honour. He lived in the ſame houſe with me ſince the ſecond of March; and I believe, that had we been longer together, I ſhould have reaped advantages from many ſenſible and judicious remarks in his converſation, although he has ſome flights, and a forwardneſs in his deportment. I wrote to you by him, merely to make you acquainted with each other.—He was fond of reading, and digeſted what he did read—He furniſhed me with the means of peruſing a work, which he thought dry and inſipid.—It is a work of great labour and ingenuity; I had heard of it, and anxiouſly deſired to ſee it, becauſe it treated of ſuch commercial and political matters as have long furniſhed a ſubject of ſpeculation in my ſolitude.—Thus have I, acci-

† This young gentleman was drowned on the coaſt of Zealand, where the ſhip was wrecked.

dentally,

dentally, had an opportunity of curſorily reading the laſt and greateſt work that hath yet appeared on the public ſtage, from the inimitable pen of Dr. Adam Smith, "On the nature and "cauſe of the wealth of nations."—It is a ſpecies of vanity to ſay, that I admire his diſquiſitions; and that they diſcover throughout, new and juſt ideas, which enlighten the minds of his readers, even ſo far as to arm them with arguments in oppoſition to his own; and which, moſt probably, would not have been conceived, had not his ſuperior genius ſtruck out new lights to enlarge the mind, give ſcope to the imagination, and draw aſide the veil which, from the beginning of time, had obſcured the objects of which he has treated.—It is a performance that every ſtateſman and legiſlator ſhould ſtudy and digeſt.—Yet I have preſumed to differ in opinion, in a few inſtances, from that great ſource of knowledge. I have done it with reſpectful deference; and I ſubmit my crude obſervations to your criticiſm: but remember, that I do it to a friend, and not to a critic†.

Although I would not venture my perſon to the uncertain chance of a paſſage to India by the route of Batavia, I committed, under Dutch colours, three ſeveral letters to the G— G— in Bengal, and to Mr. S—— S——, a gentleman of polite education, abilities, and public confidence in Madras, with ſuch informations as my peregrinations amongſt the French, Dutch, and Danes, furniſhed to my reſearches. In my letter

† The obſervations are in the Appendix B.

to Mr. H——gs, I was particular in the deſcription of the late naval engagement between the ſquadrons under Sir Edward Vernon and the Chevalier Tronjolly, of which I was a near and anxious ſpectator.—I repreſented the very dangerous intercourſe which had been carried on between the Engliſh preſidencies and the French governors in Hindoſtan; the preſent ſtate and force of the French Iſlands, with the oppreſſions exerciſed by governor de la Brillane; the political neceſſity of conquering them, and the eaſieſt mode of effecting it, with manifeſt advantages to the inhabitants and the Britiſh company and nation; the views of France in India, and on the iſland Mombaze, on the eaſt coaſt of Africa; the exultations of the French, both in Pondicherry and the iſlands, at the eſcape of governor Chevalier from Chandernagore, in whom the government of France reſted their dependence for political information and addreſs, for the purpoſe of planning and executing their deſigns in India; and took the liberty of pointing out the dangerous conſequences of ſuffering either M. Chevalier or M. Bellecombe to repair to France, as the reputation of M. Bellecombe was as diſtinguiſhed in arms as M. Chevalier was in politics.

Being heartily wearied with writing, inſtead of communicating various matters which have occurred ſince my arrival here, I refer to the accompanying papers, N° 1 to 7—comprehending copies of letters to London, to the Hague, to France, to Madras, and to Bengal; their chief entertainment will be the intereſt which you may have in what concerns me, and the new ideas

which

hich many circumſtances will convey to your atriotic mind, concerning national affairs. At ny rate, they may ſerve as memorandums to nyſelf, if ever I have the good fortune to return o Europe; but let me entreat you not to com-unicate my letters, unleſs partially, and under he ſacred ſeal of confidence. This, however, aving been originally underſtood, it is unjuſt o ſurmiſe the contrary, and

I am, &c.

LETTER XXVI.

Mrs. ———, France.

Aſia, Peninſula, of Indoſtan, Negapatnam, 1ſt July, 1779.

MY DEAR MADAM,

N ſix letters, if fortune has granted them a ſafe conveyance to your fair hands, you have ad an unpleaſant narrative of my peregrinations, om the time of our parting until the latter end f January, when I arrived at the Cape of Good lope. During my long reſidence among the rmal and dull inhabitants of that place, nothing curred which, to your delicate taſte and ſpright- imagination, could have been matter of enter-inment. In that unſocial, inhoſpitable, booriſh, d mercenary community, where every thing human form ſeems to be moved mechani-y by ſprings and pendulums, there is an nintereſting ſameneſs, a tedious uniformity, rren of all incident and anecdote; and therefore not

not very likely to ſupply materials for the amuſement of leiſure, by ſuch relations as might eaſily ſwell a letter from London or Paris, or moſt other great towns in Europe.

But though the unvaried courſe of life, and inanimated manners of the Dutch, afforded not matter for a ſeries of letters from the Cape; when I take a retroſpective view of that ſcene, and conſider it as one object, it yields ſcope for various obſervations, which you may think not unintereſting. The Mynheers and Hottentots, together with the delightful country they poſſeſs, ſhall therefore, if I can, contribute one letter at leaſt to your amuſement; which, by the way, when I write to you, Madam, is not the only object I have in view. I know you are capable of making improvements on my obſervations, and of reflecting knowledge on the author of your information. It will be the higheſt ſatisfaction to me, to be the inſtrument of enlarging, in any degree, your knowledge of remote countries, and of the various purſuits of mankind: objects which, I know engage much of your attention; though the ſenſibility of your nature, to the fortune of your fellow-creatures, renders accounts of human characters, conduct, and fate, of all other ſubjects, to you the moſt intereſting. And laſtly, by writing to you, I revive in my breaſt thoſe pleaſing ſentiments which your preſence always inſpired, and which abſence has not diminiſhed.

I embarked at the Cape on board of a Dutch ſhip bound for India, on the evening of the 26th of April, without regret, without any involuntary ſigh, or even the ſecret application of an onion

nion to force diſſembled tears. In the ſhip I ound every thing clean and neat, and plenty ithout extravagance or waſte. The captain and fficers ſupported command by rule, without luſter or affected dignity; and by the ſame law, reſpectable deportment towards each other was reſerved according to rank. Their mutual ompliments, though neither high nor frequent, ere without grin or grimace, plain and ſincere. Had I been immured in a Carthuſian friary, I ould not have been ſubjected to greater ſilence, han that to which I voluntarily ſubmitted in this oating manſion, without murmuring. My in-eſtines were pretty well ſouſed, as every morſel ate was prepared with vinegar. Such was the ardneſs of the biſcuit, that I muſt have fared ard, if I had not been fortunately bleſſed with ood teeth. But compare, my friend, this ac-ount with my deſcriptions of the Briſſon, Pin-ade, and Favori, and then judge, whether I hould not have reaſon to prefer twelve months mpriſonment in a ſhip of Mynheers to a con-nement of as many days with the Monſieurs t ſea.

I ſhall forbear to deſcribe the ſtrong, athletic, lean forms of the uncivilized, but not ſavage, atives of the Niccabar iſlands, whom I ſaw with ny eyes; or the elegant figures, beauty, and gal-antry of the fair dames of Mauritius and Bour-on, of whom the tyranny of M. de Brillane orced me to judge chiefly by report. I haſten o entertain you with the deſcription of a place where the ſoil is capable of yielding all the ne-eſſaries, and many of the luxuries of life; where the

the climate and air favour not only the vital functions, but compoſe the ſoul, and inſpire a kind of chearful ſerenity.

Is it then in the power of phyſical cauſes to give happineſs? Methinks I hear my fair relation reply, And can paradiſe, which was loſt by our firſt anceſtors, be in reality regained by reſiding in any part of this globe? Undoubtedly I ſhould not be happy in a ſolitary ſtate, even at the Cape of Good Hope; but this I will affirm, after due reflection, that with the friends of my heart, I could be contented to ſit down there for life.

The eſtabliſhment which the Dutch Eaſt India company have made on either ſide of the Cape of Good Hope, the extreme ſouthern point of that great continent which comprehends Europe, Aſia, and Africa, extend, according to computation, 450 miles eaſtward and weſtward, and 250 towards the north. To the honour of the Belgian race, let it be ſaid, that ſince firſt they atchieved their independence by actions the moſt heroic, and perſeverance the moſt wonderful in the annals of the world; they for once, regulated their public conduct by the laws of juſtice: for the territory in which they planted the colony of which I now write, they acquired by fair purchaſe, without fraud, without treachery, aſſaſſination, or oppreſſion. At the ſame time it ought, in truth, to be remembered, that this ſingle inſtance of the equity of the United Provinces prevailing over the paſſion of avarice, is owing not to the virtue of the community ſo much as to that of an individual, Mr. Van Riebeck, a ſurgeon, who exerciſed a power which devolved into his hands by chance, according

cording to his conſcience, in purchaſing with baubles, an unlimited poſſeſſion in a temperate climate, at a price below 4,000l. ſterling. Thus having ſo advantageous a bargain, the Dutch ſcared, for once, to offend againſt their nature, and be juſt.

In this extenſive domain, the power of kind nature forcing its way in ſpite of the oppreſſive genius of an excluſive company, the population amounts nearly to 17,000, of fair European deſcent, and about 30,000 ſlaves, Africans and Aſiatics. The Aborigines of the country, who are called Hottentots, and who are of a mild and tractable diſpoſition, have been eaſily reduced to the condition of obedient ſubjects. They are a quiet and inoffenſive people, uſeful to the Dutch in many reſpects, particularly in the management of flocks and herds of cattle. They have been very much miſrepreſented in Europe: and it is ſurpriſing that the fictions which have been propagated concerning them, ſhould ſo long have gained credit in the world. It is not true that they are in the practice of eating raw fleſh, or that they entwine their bodies with the entrails of cattle. They prepare their food with fire; and their cloathing conſiſts of a dreſſed hide, which is tied like a collar round the neck, hangs down over the ſhoulders near to the ground, and is broad, that it may be wrapt round the fore-part of the body: beſides this they wear another covering of ſkin round the loins, which reaches half way down the thighs. Sometimes they have a cap for the head and ſhoes for the feet of the ſame materials. Their ſhoes are formed of a

piece

piece of hide, drawn closely about the foot with thongs of the same. Instead of the rich oils used as ointment by the Asiatics and some African nations, the Hottentots anoint their bodies with the fat of cattle†.—All nations in the world, not European or of European descent, use ointment of some kind or other as a preservative from the colds of winter, and a repellent of the heats of summer. Even Europeans anointed themselves in former times. The Muscovites do so still.

The Hottentots having few conveniences for bathing, and living in a climate where they are very frequently involved in clouds of dust, have acquired habits of dirtiness; but their skins, when washed, are clear, though sallow. They are in general low of stature. Their features have a sameness in them, and are very hard. Their foreheads are prominent, their cheek-bones high, their eyes sunk in their heads, and dull, their noses flat, their lips thick, their hair black and woolly.

There is a straggling nation of Hottentots, in very inland parts of the country, who are mere savages, having neither flocks nor herds, houses, huts, nor settled residence. These savages live by prey, and their abodes are caves, rocks, and trees. They use very little cloathing: some maintain that they are cannibals; but of this I cannot affirm any thing with certainty. They are untameable, and unmanageable by any means

† The great Lord Bacon, who was not an Hottentot, prescribes anointing with oil or butter, as a means of prolonging human life.—De prolongatione vitæ.

that

that have yet been tried. They refuſe to converſe, as other unciviliſed nations readily do, by natural ſigns; and ſcarcely deſerve to be ranked among the human ſpecies. They are, happily, very few in number, and are ſeldom to be ſeen in day-light. They make their depredations in the night, like ſo many wolves and tygers.

It is evident that the Dutch ſettlements at the Cape, although they would appear in moſt parts of the world extremely proſperous, are yet by no means in ſo flouriſhing a ſtate as they would have been, if they had not groaned under the heavy hand of the Eaſt India Company; who have been ſtudious to diſcourage population, to cruſh the ſettlers, and to counteract, as much as poſſible, the natural operation of a genial ſoil to enrich its poſſeſſors. From what the coloniſts have done, even under the diſcouragement of a jealous and unjuſt government, we may imagine what they would have accompliſhed in more fortunate circumſtances! What would have been the glorious effects of Dutch perſeverance, animated by the free ſpirit of a Republic! The objects of monopoliſts are ever oppoſite to the general proſperity of the nations to which they belong. Their plans are not founded on the comprehenſive views of ſound policy, in which the chief ingredient is juſtice, but on partial and narrow principles of ſelfiſhneſs, wholly incompatible with the public welfare. The Dutch Eaſt India Company adopted the plan of an eſtabliſhment on the ſouthern point of Africa, for no other purpoſe than that it might ſerve as a place of refreſhment to their ſhipping in their

Aſiatic

Aſiatic commerce. This end they have conſtantly kept in view. The improvement of their territories in that part of the world is not their object. Their policy diſcourages improvements in this ſettlement. Were the Dutch domain about the Cape of Good Hope improved and peopled to that degree of culture and population of which it is ſuſceptible, the Eaſt India Company well know they would have reaſon to tremble leſt their ſovereignty over it ſhould not be of long continuance.

The Cape has of late years become an important object to the Company in another view: ſince the decline of their profits, by the uncommon charges which have ſupported their uſurpations, and their ambition, the directors have made it a blind to amuſe the deluded proprietors, and credulous public, with falſe ideas of ſolid ſtock and gain.

This country is capable of being made, by the ſimpleſt means, a populous, commercial colony. Its pure and temperate climate is favourable to health, longevity, and population. Its ſoil, though not apparently rich, is, from the genial temperature of the air, and alternate dews and ſun-ſhine, ſo kindly vegetative, that it nouriſhes with little culture, and almoſt ſpontaneouſly, whatever the huſbandman, the botaniſt, the floriſt chuſes to commit to its boſom. Thus it is calculated to produce whatever is requiſite to the encreaſe of flocks, horſes, and cattle; and at the ſame time to yield whatever is neceſſary to the comfortable ſubſiſtence of the human ſpecies.

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The firſt appearance of the face of the country, as well as of the ſoil, is unpromiſing. The richeſt ſpots and vales are mixed, and ſometimes ſurrounded, by mountains and ſandy deſerts. But the even vallies, the gravelly ſoil, and the abounding droves of horned cattle and horſes, render the communication between one place and another neither difficult nor expenſive. The country being thus variegated, and formed by the hand of nature into ſeparate diſtricts, is more delightful than if it had been an immenſe plain bounded only by the ocean. Mankind are naturally more attached to the places of their nativity or habitation, when they are ſituated amidſt deſerts, and hills, and in ſequeſtered vales, than when they lie in great cities or populous campaigns. The field or the grove in which their father's flock alone fed, and to which his family alone reſorted, are embraced by the mind, after long abſence and buſtling in the world, with a warm attachment: and the ſcenes of their earlieſt and moſt innocent life, awaken many an idea compoſed of tenderneſs and pain. This love of native ſoil is not ſo ardent in thoſe who have lived all their lives in great towns, or in thoſe flat expanſes ſwarming with inhabitants, where every ſcene is common to thouſands, and where no natural boundaries mark out the peculiar haunt, the mountain, the vale, the river, the wood, or the marſh, ſacred to the rural owner, and his kindred and domeſtics.

It is from this principle, I apprehend, that perſons who die at a diſtance from their native village; or, if in higher life, from their native

villa, who have lived, perhaps, more than half the year in Paris or London, when they feel themſelves drawing nigh to their latter end, requeſt their ſurviving friends to convey their bones to the country church-yard, the depoſitory of their forefathers, rather than the proudeſt mauſoleum that the vanity of their friends might erect for them in the city.—But I return from this melancholy, but not unpleaſing digreſſion, to the ſouthern promontory of Africa.

The greateſt want of this country is that of timber for building, and even for fuel. The navigable rivers are ſeparated from each other by great diſtances: but canals are more practicable here than in the low countries of Europe. The eaſt ſide of the promontory, and the inland parts, are the richeſt, and capable of the higheſt cultivation. The two principal parts, I mean with regard to actual commerce, are Table Bay and Falſe Bay, which are always ſafe; ſo formed and ſheltered, as alternately to yield ſecurity againſt the two prevailing winds which are peculiar to that meridian. There are other bays very fit for navigation; but the policy of the chartered ſovereigns, the Eaſt India company, has drawn a veil over the true knowledge of them. The ſame jealouſy which hides the knowledge of the ports to which I allude, prohibits the inhabitants from tranſporting, on any pretext, their produce and effects to the principal towns, coaſtwiſe by water.

The excellent wines of the Cape, if encouraged and improved, would yield to none in taſte, flavour, or delicacy, and without being either ſo fiery,

fiery, or ſo liable to fermentation, would be found to poſſeſs all the ſalutary qualities of either old Rheniſh or Madeira. Its grains are not inferior to thoſe of Sicily. Aloes ſucotra, myrtle-wax, ſalt, and paints, it is capable of furniſhing in profuſion; as alſo indigo, cotton, and tobacco. It may be made a ſtaple of a valuable ſlave-trade, whale-oil, ivory, and oſtrich-feathers. It contains virgin copper and copper ore, and the appearance of the ſoil in many places indicates the poſſeſſion of the precious metals. Theſe and other articles might be the ſubject of an extenſive trade to India, America, and Europe; and contribute as well to improve the exports of a generous parent ſtate, in manufactures from the raw materials, as to favour, in the moſt important inſtances, the balance of trade, eſpecially with France and Portugal.

The Dutch Eaſt India Company reſtrains the diſcovery of mines, from principles of policy, and from the ſame motives which induce them to check the improvement of the country. They know, in the firſt place, that if the inhabitants of the Cape were ſuffered to improve to the utmoſt thoſe advantages which are held up to them in ſo great abundance by the bountiful hand of exuberant nature, that country would ſoon become too populous and powerful to remain under the oppreſſive dominion of a chartered ſociety of merchants: and in the ſecond place, that ſince it is not in their power to ſecure ſo extenſive a coaſt and country from invaſion, the greateſt ſecurity conſiſts in not allowing it to become an object of temptation. Yet, under a deſpotic government,

oppreſſive and jealous of improvements, wholly reſtrained from manufactures and commerce, and even from many branches of agriculture, the people have increaſed prodigiouſly; and doubtleſs the population would be ſtill greater, did not their Aſiatic eſtabliſhments ſeduce many young men from the moſt ſalubrious to the moſt mortal climates.

Families in this place generally conſiſt of from ſeven to ſeventeen children, and ſome from eighteen to twenty ſeven. From the want of intercourſe with ſtrangers, they are all allied together by intermarriages; without feeling, however, for each other any kindred affection, and even without that ſympathy and fellowſhip which prevail in other countries among neighbours.

Their perſons are above the common ſtature, the men being generally above ſix feet in height, and the women tall in proportion. The unmarried women are fine figures, and have remarkably good complexions: but ſoon after marriage they become corpulent, and all their beauty, after they have once entered into that holy ſtate, quickly vaniſhes away. The females appear to be more numerous than the other ſex. I compute, that at leaſt five-ſixth parts of the whole number of European deſcent (ſeventeen thouſand) are females and male children under manhood. About one-fourth part of thoſe who are deſcended from Europeans, reſide at Cape town, and about two-fifths of all the ſlaves.

The people of this place are leſs the deſcendants of the Dutch than of emigrants from France, (after the revocation of the edict of Nantz) from

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all the Proteſtant eſtates in Germany, and from the Auſtrian Netherlands.

Notwithſtanding all that has been ſaid of the political wiſdom of the Dutch, I cannot help thinking, that their Eaſt India Company have for ſome time been purſuing meaſures which ſavour rather of low cunning and treachery than of ſound policy. They ſeem to have been led into thoſe meaſures partly by proſperity, and conſequently ambition; but principally by that uninterrupted peace which the United Provinces have enjoyed in Europe for thirty two years; during which time, for the ſake of immediate gain, they have been conſtantly ſtimulating hoſtilities between their neighbours and allies. Had the Company, or rather the States General, encouraged their ſettlement at the Cape, by inviting the ſettlers to avail themſelves to the utmoſt of its fertility and extent, it would have been in a condition to furniſh thoſe neceſſary ſupplies of men for the ſecurity of their Aſiatic eſtabliſhments, of which ſupplies, the approach of a general war in Europe threatens wholly to deprive them. It is certain, that recruits for the Dutch ſettlements in Aſia, have long been chiefly drawn from thoſe unhappy emigrants, who having fled from the poverty and deſpotiſm of Germany, are annually kidnapped in Holland. But the avenues of emigration will be ſhut up by war; even greater ſupplies of men will be wanted than ever by the Dutch Eaſt India Company; and theſe the depopulated ſtates cannot furniſh. It has been computed, by the moſt probable grounds, that from twenty ſeven to thirty ſhips

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carry out each of them, on an average, every year, two hundred recruits; and that of the whole number annually exported in all thoſe ſhips, fifty never live to return, after the expiration of their terms, to Europe: and farther, that ſhips bound to Batavia and the eaſtern ſettlements carrying out double complements of ſeamen (their ſingle complements being a fourth part greater than ours) have returned with ſcarcely ſufficient ſtrength to work their ſhips. The annual mortality is thus reduced to 10,000 able-bodied Europeans at the leaſt, in the vigour of life. What a melancholy deſtruction of the human race! Whence is this neceſſary ſupply now to come? Ought we any longer to be aſtoniſhed, that the profits of the company's monopoly of ſpices, and other articles of trade, ſhould have been incompetent to the charges of maintaining and protecting their ſettlements, and the pompous parade of government in Batavia? How will they be able to maintain their uſurped poſſeſſions againſt the oppreſſed natives alone, even without a foreign enemy in Europe to call forth their navy, and to oblige them to garriſon their own, and the barrier towns?

As to the eſtabliſhment of the Cape, it might be attacked with ſucceſs by a number only equal to its garriſon, of four hundred or five hundred effective men in the open fields: ſuch is the poſition of towns, and the nature of the fortifications in that country. The country militia lie too ſcattered to render effectual ſervice: and I will hazard an opinion, that the towns people will not diſcover great proweſs againſt any enemy,

my, and more eſpecially againſt a power, under whoſe government the privileges of commerce and agriculture would be enlarged, and which, profeſſing the Proteſtant faith, would give entire ſatisfaction to mothers, wives, and daughters.

The Company have reſerved ſome ground-rents on country plantations and town ſettlements; others are held under a kind of perpetual tenure. As there is no exportation but from Table and Falſe Bays, wines, grain, and ſome other articles, pay duties upon entering the towns. There is a conſiderable quantity of wheat ſhipped annually by the Company to Batavia, Ceylon, and Holland. Cattle and ſheep for the uſe of ſhipping, are provided by contracting farmers, who pay a duty for this excluſive privilege. There are ſeveral other duties of export and import. All theſe taxes ſerve to defray the charges of government, which are indeed moderate: But the rapacity and undue exactions of the governors, have nearly determined the people to revolt from the government of the company, and to ſeek redreſs from the ſtates General.

The chief juſtice, or fiſcal, unites in his own perſon the three diſtinct branches of government; the legiſlative, the judicial, and the executive. This legiſlator, judge, and executioner, with high powers, poſſeſſes great privileges and emoluments: he can impoſe and levy taxes for his own uſe; diſpenſe with laws; create new crimes; compound for crimes of all denominations and complexions; and, in general, diſpoſe as he pleaſes, of the lives and fortunes of the whole people. It is true, there is a kind of controuling

power,

power, paramount to this high-privileged perſon; but woe to him who dares to appeal to that tribunal.

Moſt families manufacture their own leather, make the coass, veſts, breeches, ſtockings, ſhirts, and ſhoes of the men; and the ſaçques, gowns, petticoats, ſhifts, ſtockings, caps, ſhoes, &c. &c. of the ladies, together with moſt articles of houſhold furniture: ſo that they are only obliged to import from Europe and Aſia the groſs materials, ſuch as woollens, and cotton draperies and ſilks, and a few of the ſimpleſt articles of conveniency, and ſtill fewer of luxury. They require few tradeſmen, becauſe all mechanical ſervices are for the moſt part performed at home, as of old among the Greeks and Romans, by ſlaves. The ſervant who waits at table, is equally dextrous at his knitting and ſewing-needle, ſciſſars, cutting-knife, awl, the axe, the ſaw, the plane, the trowel, and the painting-bruſh.

Their ſtreets are ſpacious, airy, and regularly laid out at right angles; and they ſeem to have inherited and preſerved the cleanlineſs of Haerlem and Delft. But there is one inconveniency which they cannot remedy by all their induſtry: The ſtrong ſqualls of wind which often force themſelve through narrow paſſes between the ſurrounding mountains, raiſe duſt in the ſtreets, in troubleſome quantities, in ſpite of the frequent application of water from canals and occaſional gutters.

I know not how the Hollanders would be able to carry on their monopoly, without the ſeaſon-

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able refreſhments of the Cape. Its vegetables, roots, and fruits are abundant, cheap, and good; the beef and mutton ſtill more ſo. In truth, I think all nations trading hither, have for ſome time been infinitely obliged to the Dutch ſettlement in that corner, as it may literally be called, of the world, notwithſtanding that ſtrangers are more impoſed upon here than in any country I know; for neither Madagaſcar nor Johana can furniſh mutton, or garden vegetables; and the very wines of the Cape are ſo reaſonable, that they are a cheap refreſhment to common ſeamen. I am perſuaded that the wines there of the ſecond year, are more mellow than thoſe of Europe and Madeira would be in five.

Every houſe-keeper, the governor and members of council excepted, take penſioners: and it is but juſtice to their tables, beds, and linen, to acknowledge, that they are all good and reaſonable. I am apt to imagine, that the practice of taking boarders (for that is what the inhabitants of the Cape mean by taking penſioners) has been handed down from the original ſettlers, and that the principle of pride has in this manner been lulled by habit.—But I beg pardon, I forgot that the nation of which I now write, worſhip no other idol than one, and that is intereſt.

Of the diſcouragement that is ſhewn to ſtrangers from ſettling at the Cape, I need mention only one inſtance. All houſe-keepers are obliged to account every evening to the lord-fiſcal, for every perſon entertained within their roof, under pain of cenſure and a forfeiture. As there is an outward appearance of devotion and ſolemn mo-

rality,

rality, in the countenances, dreſs, gait, and converſation of theſe people, I was willing to attribute this extraordinary regulation to one or other of theſe two cauſes. I imagined, that either it was intended to reſtrain a certain kind of frolickſome immorality in private, or to ſecure (as in Amſterdam) the punctual payment of a tax (in ſcrupulous proportion to the quantity of cuſtom) on a certain licenſed order of good-natured, and public-ſpirited damſels, who occaſionally adminiſter to the entertainment of ſtrangers. But I found on enquiry, that the ſpirit of this law had for its only object, the diſcouragement of all intercourſe with ſtrangers.

As the Cape of Good Hope has, for many years, been a half-way houſe for refreſhment, out and home, penſioners as well as hoſts of quick conceptions and ſome genius, have had frequent opportunities of drawing the ſtrangeſt medleys of characters, and of remarking the various effects of wealth and climate on the paſſions and manners of men. The various degrees of rank, and the different ſtations and circumſtances of perſons travelling to and from India, have furniſhed ample ſcope for obſervations of this kind. For my part, all that I ſhall ſay, is, that my ſhort and anxious reſidence at the Cape furniſhed matter for reflections, which neither attached me to the place of my deſtination, nor prepoſſeſſed me in favour of the morals, genius, or wiſdom of men, who may more properly be denominated its ſojourners than its inhabitants.

I have often thought, and now I am convinced that in order to humble the over-bearing Dutch,

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nd to reduce their mercantile genius within eaſonable bounds (as well as thereby to ſecure he tranquillity of Europe) they muſt have a king, nd a mixed form of government, like England, ven if their government ſhould be extended in a outh-weſtward direction, by encroachments on he houſe of Auſtria. For theſe encroachments the mperor, I think, ſhould be indemnified by the ecovery to his family of Alſace and Lorraine. Our couſin of Orange is a ſenſible, dapper, rincely fellow; and the preſent amiable princeſs f that Houſe, is better qualified than any woman in Europe, one excepted*, to give luſtre and ignity to ſovereignty. Britain, Pruſſia, Ruſſia, nd the other proteſtant powers of the north, by firm union among themſelves, and a fair tranſoſition of the balance of power, are capable of recting another monarchy in Europe.—But old! this is downright politics; a ſubject proper or the diſcuſſion only of miniſters of ſtate; and ny preſumptuous treſpaſſes on this dignified round, have ſcarcely left room for me to ſay, hat I am your's, &c. &c.

LETTER XXVII.

To ——— ———, Eſqrs. London.

Calcutta, 15th *Sept.* 1779.

EVER ſince my arrival in India, I have deferred writing to you until this time, becauſe wiſhed to acquire an accurate knowledge of

* The Queen of England.

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many particulars in which you are much concerned, and this was to be gained only by a reſidence for ſome months in this country. Although I cannot yet write ſo much to your ſatisfaction as I wiſh to do, it would be improper, as I conceive, any longer to delay giving you an account of what has occurred to my obſervation ſince my arrival in this famed peninſula; where I landed, in a low ſtate of health, at Negapatnam, on the firſt of July.

The unſettled, and in truth the critical ſtate of this government, appears to me to have ſuſpended, for ſome time, all the rational exertions of its principal members, and their moſt intimate friends. Hopes and fears, anxieties and doubts, have given birth to meaſures, as ſingular in their nature as ſome of them, I fear, will be injurious in their conſequences. But were the directors inſtructed in the proper remedies for the diſorders that pervade at this moment the political and commercial conſtitution of the company in India, and were they diſpoſed to liſten to the beſt advice, the wiſeſt counſels and the beſt diſpoſitions would be of no avail. While the preſent chief governor, with two votes in five, holds the chair under the influence of black ſervants and a foreign lady, the orders of the directors will continue to be treated with avowed contempt, and the treaſures of the Company be appropriated to private uſes. The reins of government are held in Calcutta; while the repreſentatives of the proprietors, aſſembled in Leadenhall-ſtreet, are conſidered as a ſet of blockheads, aſſuming a power which the actual poſſeſſion of the blacks has

placed

placed de facto in other hands. It is not improbable that Mr. H———s's great familiarity and close connexion with Mr. R—s, the governor of Chinsura, may have instructed him in the imperious sway which the Dutch company's principal agents in Batavia exercise over their constituents and fellow-servants, as well as their unhappy dependents, the natives of their settlements in Asia. I am no partizan; on the contrary, I came to this country strongly prepossessed in favour of the men, whose measures are too public not to be known, and too unjustifiable to admit of defence.

The censures which I have now bestowed with that freedom which I wish ever to direct my sentiments and actions, cannot in justice be extended to all the Company's servants without exception. Among these there are men well entitled to the praise of both ability and honour. Mr. F——s and Mr. W——r undoubtedly possess sagacity to discern, and virtue to pursue, the true interests of their constituents, and of the English nation, as well as the happiness of the natives of Hindostan; objects which are in reality closely connected together, and which could never have been separated but by a policy equally unsound and inhuman. Nor can I omit to mention, on this occasion, Mr. B—ll, a gentleman of eminent talents and strict honour; though he may be restrained, in some degree, from opposing the measures of Mr. H——s, by an engagement on the part of his friends in England, when he was appointed to the fourth seat in the supreme council. This precaution was thought necessary,

neceſſary, as Mr. B—ll's firmneſs and abilities were the only formidable oppoſition to Mr. H——s's mal-adminiſtration before the ſupreme board was conſtituted. Indeed, the public differences of theſe gentlemen, gave birth, as diſputes of this kind commonly do, to a very conſiderable degree of mutual animoſity.

Various cauſes have occurred to incline me, at preſent, to return to England as ſpeedily as poſſible; one of which may probably appear to be the effect of vanity. I have the preſumption to imagine, that a knowledge of moſt countries in America and Europe, with various experience, have enabled me to ſhew how the ſoil and people of this country may be made to extend ſtill farther the purſuits of commerce, colonization, and manufactures; by which the Britiſh government would acquire a preſent ſupply, as well as a permanent revenue, which would open a ſource of wealth to individuals, and at the ſame time confer on the chartered Company, advantages equal to the full extent of their ambition. I am perſuaded, that my ideas concerning theſe matters are of a different nature from any ever entertained before in this country: and I imagine, if clearly ſtated, they would draw the attention both of the King's miniſters and the directors of the Eaſt India Company. Theſe objects, if they ſhould not be thought chimerical, will doubtleſs be allowed to be grand and important. I wiſh to open ſo ſplendid a field of improvement in India, as will encreaſe the wealth of

of Britiſh ſubjects individually, and relieve the public from an incumbrance of debt which muſt otherwiſe become inſupportable.

I am, &c.

LETTER XXVIII.

To J—— M——, Eſq. London.

Calcutta, Sept. 20th, 1779.

I SET my foot on the peninſula of Hindoſtan at Negapatnam, on the firſt of July. The papers that accompany this, will give you an account of my adventures from the 8th of November, 1778, when I wrote laſt, to my arrival in Calcutta on the 20th of Auguſt. Our correſpondence, my friend, has ſuffered a long interruption, but this I mean to make up, on my part, by writing to you regularly twice every week. This country affords an ample field for obſervation, and yields materials for ſpeculation of every kind, in the utmoſt abundance. If any of my reflections ſhould be thought worthy of their attention who alone can carry them into beneficial conſequences; to have been in any degree ſubſervient to the proſperity of my country, would afford a full recompence for all my ſufferings from the hour in which I embarked at L'Orient on board the Briſſon, to that on which I landed

I landed on the Indian ſhore at Nagapatnam. I am ambitious, I confeſs, of laying ſome of my thoughts on political and commercial ſubjects, before men in power and of public ſpirit; being convinced, that, matured by their judgment, and digeſted into ſome practicable plan, they would contribute largely to the glory of my country and the happineſs of mankind. But with regard to this matter, I ſhall be directed wholly by the advice of my friends. In the mean time, I ſhall amuſe my leiſure by indulging a turn, on which you have ſo often rallied me, hoping that you and our excellent friend at leaſt, will peruſe my frequent and long epiſtles not without ſatisfaction.

Had the Engliſh Eaſt-India Company known, and fully improved, all thoſe advantages which lay within the ſphere of their power in the Eaſt, their capital would this day have exceeded twenty millions of pounds ſterling; and thirty millions would have been added to the preſent wealth of the nation, as I am ready to demonſtrate. But what is of greater importance, the intereſts of the Company, clearly underſtood and ſteadily purſued, would have ſecured the attachment, with the felicity, of above twenty millions of uſeful and ingenious new ſubjects, and rendered them and their poſterity a fund of wealth, power, and ſecurity, to the extended ſtate. That theſe great benefits have not accrued to Great Britain, and alſo to Hindoſtan, is owing to the diſtance between theſe countries, which at once tempted and protected the infidelity and the intrigues of the ſervants of the Eaſt India Company. I do not mean to expreſs any virulence againſt theſe men,

men. When I conſider the natural gradations by which they are led to adopt a courſe of conduct, as diſhonourable to themſelves as ruinous to the Company and to the public; when I trace their actions through the antecedent progreſs of example, operating on young and pliant minds; indignation at the effect is partly loſt in regretting the cauſe. For it is not ſurpriſing that youth, withdrawn from the tuition of parents and guardians, aſſociating with the cool, inſinuating, and aſſimilating natives of India, and entering into their lines of buſineſs; it is not ſurpriſing that young men unacquainted with the world, ſhould in theſe circumſtances adopt the practice and rules not only of predeceſſors and colleagues in office, but alſo of all around them, whether Gentoos or Mahomedans. The young men that afterwards become the governors of Hindoſtan, generally ſet out for that country with ideas of acquiring wealth; which ideas, being nouriſhed not only by example, but advice and exhortation, ſoon grow up into the predominant paſſion of the heart, and ruling principle of the mind, which at laſt, in too many inſtances, become inſenſible to every human feeling, and too frequently even dead to the demands of common juſtice. Thus, my friend, I do not ſo much arraign the ſervants of the Company (for their conduct is that of human nature placed in certain circumſtances) as I blame the impolicy of the Britiſh legiſlature, for not having eſtabliſhed in India, an order of affairs, at once more public and more virtuous.

For, however indulgent we may be to human weakneſs, are perſons, educated in the manner I have deſcribed, capable of improving the morals of the people, or of giving ſtability to government? Are they likely to render the natives contented and happy in the ſecure enjoyment of the fruits of induſtry, whether in agriculture, manufactures, or commerce, either by their precepts or example, or by an impartial adminiſtration of juſtice?

That the advantages of India are not cultivated to that extent of improvement of which they are capable, I have aſcribed not to any negligence of the Hindoos, but to that of the Europeans ſojourning among them: and I think with good reaſon. For the natives of Hindoſtan cultivated, and abundantly poſſeſſed, all the neceſſaries and luxuries that were adapted to their cuſtoms, and conſiſtent with their religious tenets. Their ſoil, their climate, their ingenuity, but above all, their perſeverance, were equal to every undertaking that did not require very great bodily ſtrength. But why introduce new kinds of pleaſure? why create new wants? They never knew a deſire beyond the unvaried cuſtom of their anceſtors for ages paſt, until European avarice, and ambition, taught them the neceſſity of ſecuring to themſelves ſome degree of happineſs, by ſatiating the rapacity of ſtrangers with ſuch new commodities as were pointed out to their native ingeniouſneſs.

The Company's pretenſion to dominion, and their excluſive privileges of internal trade in India, extend from Cape Comorin in the tenth, to the

the twenty-ninth degree of North latitude, and over a ſpace from eaſt to weſt, on an average, of eight hundred miles; beſides their poſſeſſions on the coaſts of Guzarat and Malabar. The temperature of the climate, ſeldom, and not long, intenſely hot, but never cold; the looſe, genial, vegetative particles of the ſoil, which may receive additional fertility from inundations that are always at command, as well as from numerous herds of horned cattle and ſheep; the conſequent low price of labour; the wiſe political eſtabliſhments of Caſtes, or tribes; the perſevering ingenuity of the natives; certain inſtitutions calculated to promote population†: theſe are circumſtances which render Hindoſtan, of all countries on the earth, the fitteſt for that ſpecies of commerce, which will allow the lord-paramount to export its copious redundancy without violating juſtice, offending induſtry, or impoveriſhing the people; provided that government take care, that a neceſſary proportion of money, or other authentic currency, be conſtantly kept in circulation, to prevent a ſtagnation in the commerce of the inhabitants with merchants, manufactures, and each other. The ſoil, aided by the climate, nightly dews, and alternate rains and ſun-ſhine, doth now yield, almoſt ſpontaneouſly, rich crops of rice, and other grains, twice,

† As the Gentoo religion admits not of converts from other religions, and eaſily diſcards unworthy members from the number of its own votaries, the whole ſect of the Gentoos muſt have been long ago extinct, if their political ſagacity had not eſtabliſhed an effectual remedy againſt depopulation, by an indiſpenſable obligation to marry their children when infants; who muſt conſummate as ſoon as they arrive at the age of puberty.

and ſometimes thrice, every year. It is capable of producing abundantly, and of ſuperior qualities, the ſugar-cane, indigo ſhrub, cocoa-tree, coffee-tree, cotton-tree, and all the fruits, roots, and vegetables peculiar to the tropics in the weſtern hemiſphere, as well as moſt of the common grain of Europe, and wheat in great abundance. It is computed, that the Company's territories under the preſidency of Bengal, may be divided into three equal parts: one third part is under cultivation; another, having been abandoned by the human inhabitants flying from oppreſſion, has grown up into woods, and become a receptacle for tigers, leopards, wolves, buffaloes, and elephants; and the remaining part is occupied by rivers, canals, lakes, and moraſſes. It is alſo computed, that the native inhabitants are yet in number from twelve to fifteen millions, and that the redundancy of their labours and ingenuity, exported annually, is equal to two millions, five hundred thouſand pounds ſterling. Thus it is eaſy to calculate what the population and production would be, if the abandoned parts were again inhabited and cultivated. Nor will it be difficult to form a pretty accurate eſtimate of what would be the population, productions, and redundancy of the whole, under a wiſe and juſt ſyſtem of government, that ſhould encourage ſuch improvements as, with the conſent of the natives, ſhould be introduced by Europeans of judgment and experience.

Were the abandoned parts of the Company's territories in Bengal to be again inhabited, it is evident from the ſimple rule of proportion, that the

the population would be from 24 to 30 millions, and the exports 5,000,000,l and the increaſe of population and improvement (in caſe of a political revolution as I have juſt now ſuppoſed) by additional manufactures and agriculture, may be eſtimated, on a moderate computation, at one third part more, making the population 35 millions, and the annual redundant exports 6,666,666 l.

The Company's territorial poſſeſſions and virtual dominion on the coaſt of Coromandel, Golconda, and Orixa, under the preſidency of Madras, are capable of receiving much higher improvement, and conſequently of yielding in proportion a greater redundancy of labour for the advancement of commerce; becauſe, although the natives of theſe coaſts are infinitely more refined in their manners, more juſt in their dealings, and more tractable in their nature, than the natives of Bengal, as being leſs ſuperſtitious, they have hitherto been forced to ſubmit to ſeverer ſcourges and more outrageous injuſtice†. From this curſory view, I think it ſufficiently appears that Britain has not derived thoſe advantages in fact, which from the kindeſt ſoil, the moſt temperate

† The Northern Circars alſo, under a judicious ſyſtem of government, and under permanent and encouraging tenures, might prove an admirable ſource of population, wealth, and general ſecurity. That part of the Decan never flouriſhed in its full glory ſince the Mogul Tartars acquired the ſovereignty of Hindoſtan; becauſe, having been amongſt the laſt of the countries of that peninſula which were effectually ſubdued, it was a continual ſubject of contention among court favourites and uſurpers.

When the Northern Circars were ceded by Salabat Jung to the French in 1753, they yielded a revenue exceeding five hundred thouſand pounds, and they were capable of yielding near double that amount, beſides capital advantages in the way of trade; but they have declined gradually ſince, as well in revenue and manufactures as in population.

climate,

climate, and the moſt ingenious, docile people in the world, might have been reaſonably expected. But it is not perhaps too bold to go farther. A right improvement of the Britiſh acquiſition in India, is a more important object to this nation than the ſubjugation of the North Americans; an object on which ſo many millions of treaſure have been expended, and to which ſo many thouſands of lives have been ſacrificed.

Wealth, power, and dominion, are often acquired by good fortune; but to preſerve them is the province of political ſagacity. Greater glory, as well as greater advantage, is to be acquired by retaining and improving, than by extending conqueſts. Let Britain ſeriouſly conſider the truth of thoſe maxims, in the preſent moment. The nations of Europe had long viewed the profeſſion of a merchant as ignominious: it was a degradation not only from nobility but from the rank of a gentleman; and excluded men of the moſt exemplary probity and public ſpirit, who were in the practice of trade, from all ſocieties above the contemptuous denomination of Bourgois; while even a ſtrolling actor preſerved the rank and dignity of illuſtrious birth and family. But experience, and the progreſs of knowledge, have diſpelled thoſe abſurd prejudices. The moſt haughty monarchies in Europe, beholding with aſtoniſhment and with dread, the rapid growth of ſmall ſtates by the genial influences of thoſe ſacred ſiſters, Induſtry, Commerce, and Freedom, endeavour to excite in their dominions by means of wiſe inſtitutions and public encouragements, a general emulation in Trade, which they

they no longer disdain to acknowledge as the mother of arts, the fountain of wealth, and the protectress of power.—But of all branches of traffic, that with India, is, to an European people, the most advantageous. The nation that ingrosses this commerce, centres in itself that of the world: for it not only comprehends those articles which form the balance of trade, but also many other commodities, which it can furnish on such low terms as will lessen the value of labour at home, and thereby reduce the price of the necessaries of life. The low prices of provisions and clothing, and consequent low price of labour, the superstitious observance of religious tenants, and singular prejudices of Casts in their food and associations, with other circumstances which it is unnecessary to enumerate, and some of which I have already hinted, conspire to render the raw materials as well as the manufactures of India, so amazingly cheap, that by a wise, political establishment, the manufactures of Britain might be so effectually improved, and other commodities imported in British vessels on such easy terms, that England would be enabled to undersell all the markets in Europe, and London would become the grand emporium of the world. I am, &c.

LETTER XXIX.

To J——— M———, Esq; London.

Calcutta, 25th Sept. 1779.

A LETTER from Europe, my friend, to a person residing in India, is a greater cordial than one from India to an Inhabitant of Europe.

In

In all our peregrinations, our imaginations ſtill hover, with filial affection, over our native ſoil; the love of which is never ſo ſtrongly felt as in foreign countries. Your kind enquiries, your information with reſpect to the various particulars in which you know me to be intereſted, and your public news, afford a refreſhment, of which my preſent ſtate of anxiety and ſuſpence ſtands much in need.

Long and expenſive ſufferings in a tedious paſſage hither, interrupted by many untoward and painful accidents; the unſettled ſtate of this government, which prevents both parties from ſerving their friends, except a few ſingular favourites, on whom a ſingular party beſtows the Company's treaſures in great profuſion; in one word, the diſappointment of all my views, inclines me to think on returning to Europe. On this ſubject I have not yet come to any final determination. But if I ſhall be forced, after ſo much wandering, to bend my courſe homeward at laſt, I flatter myſelf, that a voyage which has proved unprofitable and injurious to myſelf, will not be wholly uſeleſs to my country. My free intercourſe with men of buſineſs, of obſervation, and political knowledge, in circumſtances which diſpoſed them to be not a little communicative†, together with what I have ſeen or learnt in this country and elſewhere, has enabled me, if I miſtake not, to offer to the conſideration of men in power in Britain, certain hints, which may lead

† On ſhip-board on a long voyage, where fellow-paſſengers are generally unreſerved, and where they often enter into mutual friendſhip.

them

them into enquiries that may be productive of the greateſt public benefits.

Your accounts relative to the American war, to one who knows America as well as I do, and who is ſo well acquainted as I am with many of its inhabitants, would be highly intereſting, even if I were not concerned for the welfare of Britain. You dwell with rapture on Britiſh valour, which certainly never ſhone with brighter luſtre than in the preſent conteſt with the Colonies. But while I glory in the ſpirit of my countrymen, I regret the cauſe in which it is now exerted, and ſee more matter of grief than of triumph in all their victories.—I admire the intrepidity and military ſkill of Colonel Campbell; but what I contemplate, without a mixture of pain, is, his moderation, clemency, and humanity. His victory† was neither ſtained by an unneceſſary effuſion of blood, nor degraded by preſent or ſubſequent cruelty.

You deſire to know what I now think of the ſtruggle between Great Britain and her Colonies? What I thought from the beginning of that ſtruggle I think ſtill: a ſpeedy accommodation of all differences appears to me to be equally the intereſt of both parties.

That this is the intereſt of Britain, will not, I apprehend, require much proof. A loſs of men, an encreaſe of taxes, a decay of commerce, inculcate on England, in the moſt forcible manner, peace with America. Taxes cannot poſſibly be multiplied ad infinitum. Thoſe ideas of infinity

† Savannah, November 1778.

that

that are ſo familiar, and ſo innocent in the mouths of metaphyſicians, in the practice of life and buſineſs are both falſe and pernicious. The time will come, and if the American war be continued, is perhaps not very remote, when Britain will be obliged to follow the diſcreditable example of France, in reducing, without ceremony, the intereſt of her immenſe debt, and diminiſhing the intrinſic value of her current coin.

There are not wanting many reaſons which, on the other hand, urge the Americans to an accommodation with Britain. Of theſe, ſome are felt, and others may be foreſeen. The devaſtations, and horrors, and miſeries of a country which is the ſeat of war, muſt render peace, on ſafe and honourable terms, an object of all others the moſt deſirable. But what terms are ſafe and honourable? that is the queſtion. Theſe, it would ſeem, the leaders of the coloniſts think inſeparably connected with independency on the mother country. I am of a contrary opinion. I do not ſay that Great Britain is able to conquer North America; but I am confident that North America will not long maintain its independency on Britain, without falling into a dependency on ſome other power, or powers, of Europe.

For, firſt; the large extent of her expoſed coaſts will require for their protection, a more abſolute, compact, and vigilant power than that of a republic.

Secondly; the natural jealouſies and unſettled pretenſions of the ſeveral provinces, which are quaſhed for the preſent only by the incumbent preſſure of a common enemy, will rebound with an

in elaſtic force when that weight ſhall be removed.

Thirdly; that country, which from its infancy was nurſed by the kind and indulgent aid of the parent ſtate, which ſereened it from foreign invaſion, and ſupported its civil and military eſtabliſhments, muſt feel an alarming reverſe of fortune when ſubjected to the taxes that will be unavoidably neceſſary for the ſupport of the new government; for the defence of the coaſt; for the payment of the intereſt of the public debt; for the eſtabliſhment of a military ſyſtem, with fortifications; together with a navy, dock yards, and ports. The taxation of America, it has been computed, under the Britiſh government, did not exceed ſixpence on the poll of the people: under the new ſyſtem, it will amount, at the leaſt, to forty ſhillings †

Fourthly; the produce of America, when exported indiſcriminately to all the markets of Europe, will fall in its value, and return much leſs to the planter, than it did when circulated all over the world through the channel of Great Britain: becauſe the merchants of that country to whom it was formerly conſigned, by means of their contiguity and mercantile knowledge, were able

† Britain was in the uniform practice of nurſing the infant colonies with money, goods, credit, markets, and people. She expended in the laſt French war, ninety millions in the defence of America; and both before and ſince, continually bore the civil and military charges of government. The country bore only the minute expences of its internal police. The Britiſh nation now tax themſelves with four millions annually, to pay the ſimple intereſt of their advances for the eſtabliſhment and ſecurity of America: and America muſt have already contracted a public debt of at leaſt thirty-five millions, at a rate of intereſt not under five per cent. per annum.

to judge of the ſtate of markets; while their large capitals and eſtabliſhed credit enabled them to keep up the prices. But theſe advantages can have no place, when planters muſt ſell off their goods at all adventures, ignorant themſelves of the ſtate of markets in the old world, and confiding in maſters of veſſels, ſtill more ignorant; when they are obliged to ſubmit to the mercenary and ſubtle diſpoſitions of foreigners, who have not, like the Engliſh, any natural attachment to them; who have not any intereſt in procuring a fair market price, becauſe they make no advances; and, whatever they may take, give not any credit. Thus America, ſtript of that credit which enabled her to cultivate her waſte lands, and to trade with eaſe, muſt now, by dint of labour, and indefatigable induſtry, in ſtraitened circumſtances, and without the proſpect of a certain mart, cultivate the lands, raiſe the commodities, and furniſh ſhips for tranſportation, many months before they can expect a reimburſement.

Fifthly; France is too political to encourage the abſolute independency of a country ſo extenſive and flouriſhing as that of North America; for that independency might involve in its conſequence, an uncontroulable dominion over the trade of all America, Aſia, and Africa, and the impoveriſhment of all Europe; events, which the policy of the moſt enlightened nation of Europe would alone ſtudy to prevent, even if we could ſuppoſe all the other powers of that diviſion of the globe ſo infatuated as to regard them with indifference. The views of France, therefore,

can

n be no other than to take advantage of the unappy conteſt between Britain and her Colonies, humble the power of her proud rival, and by e ſame means to reduce America to ſo low a itch, as to render her an eaſy prey to be divided mong the maritime powers of Europe, retaing, as her own ſhare, the moſt valuable proinces, Virginia, Maryland, and the Carolinas. his, doubtleſs, is the object of the policy of rance. America, ſay the politicians of that ountry, muſt be enabled to reſiſt the power of ritain, until both countries are ſo effectually exauſted, that Britain ſhall ceaſe to be, in trade nd naval power, even the rival of France, and hat America ſhall look up to her allies alone or protection; and then France will acquire an aſcendency over America, more abſolute and deſpotic than if it were a French colony. This plan was ſuggeſted by the Duke de Choiſeul, during his adminiſtration, and he has continued to recommend and urge it, ſince he quitted the helm of ſtate. He ſent out a Monſieur Boileau, a man of great political talents and addreſs, to foment the rebellion in America in its very firſt appearances, by preaching a doctrine exploded in his own country, the natural rights of mankind; by holding up to the imaginations of diſcontented and turbulent men, the dazzling glories of independency, and by well-timed, gilded aſſurances from the grand monarque. Yet it is certain, notwithſtanding all this, that if France had not received certain information that Britain was well diſpoſed to accommodate matters with America,

America, at the conclusion of the year 1777 (in consequence of which Dr. Franklin protested that unless France would immediately declare in favour of America, her cause would be lost) the interposition of the grand monarque would have continued under a political veil for a campaign or two longer. The treacherous and dastardly conduct of Count D'Estaign's fleet, shews clearly that it is not yet the intention of France to enter heartily into the cause of the Americans, because they are not sufficiently reduced in money and power, tamely to bend their necks to that yoke which their allies have long been preparing for them.

Sixthly; taxes beyond a certain amount, cannot be borne by any species of internal industry known to mankind. High taxes can be supported only by that kind of commerce which imports from foreign states a balance in the precious metals. Whatever taxes are raised beyond such as are necessary for defraying the current expences of government, and that are imposed for the purpose of paying the interest of an accumulated or funded debt, are detrimental to all countries, but to those that depend solely on colonization and agriculture, are absolutely ruinous.

In new settlements, fertility of soil, and the low value of land, awaken an ambition in almost every man, of becoming an independent farmer or planter. He forsakes the occupation of a manufacturer, and the service of others, and becomes, on his own account, a cultivator of new soils. Hence the price of labour rises above the value of those articles on which it is bestowed; and

and the wants of citizens, as well as of landholders, are ſupplied by the importation of different commodities from ſtrangers, ſubject to certain duties: and as all taxes do ultimately fall upon lands, if labour is burthened with a public claim chargeable directly upon the land and its productions, and that both the internal and imported manufactures are alſo taxed in a proportionate degree; the ſum of the whole becomes more than a triple tax upon agriculture; becauſe each individual who pays the original tax, claims both an intereſt and a profit upon the previous advances, agreeably to the laws and principles of trade. Theſe taxes will be grievouſly felt by thoſe who were accuſtomed to pay only ſix-pence per head. Inſtead of one ſix-pence, the exigencies of the new government will call, as I have already obſerved, for eighty ſix-pences. If Holland, Venice, Genoa, and the Hans-Towns, whoſe forms of government are wholly or partly republican, had poſſeſſed territories of ſo ſpacious an extent as to have made agriculture a capital object, they muſt have periſhed the moment when richer powers became rivals in their trade.

Seventhly; America will ſee her new ſettlements abandoned, her country depopulated, her navigation and commerce ruined, and her provinces a ſubject of perpetual contention to Europe. France will become the object of her jealouſy and deteſtation; and ſhe will at laſt be convinced, that her true happineſs conſiſts in a reunion with the parent ſtate.

The Americans ſeem to tread in the foot-ſteps of Cromwell and his puritanical adherents in the

the reign of King Charles I. If they become independent, their republican, or more properly their democratical government will not, in all probability, be of long continuance. People of condition, character, and ſenſe, will not long endure the inſolence, abuſes, and depredations of upſtarts, at the heads of armies, and in the departments of power. Their reſentment againſt the parent ſtate, no longer inflamed by the ſeverities of war, will gradually cool. Their paſſions will ſubſide, and yield to the diſpaſſionate voice of reaſon, which will unite them in a reſolution to take up arms for the purpoſe of reſtoring, on improved and permanent principles, that original form of government which connected them with Great Britain.

Thus, my friend, have I delivered my ſentiments concerning the probable iſſue of that melancholy controverſy which diſturbs every quarter of the world. I believe it will terminate as family quarrels commonly do, in a ſincere reconciliation between the contending parties, and in as ſincere a deteſtation of thoſe malicious intermedlers who fanned the flame of diſcord. It were to be wiſhed, in the preſent criſis, that every branch of the houſe of Bourbon would call to mind that magnanimous declaration of the Emperor Charles V. when ſolicited by his miniſters to accept the offers of thoſe provinces of France which had revolted againſt his inveterate enemy Henry II. Though that prince had every motive to accept thoſe offers, which ambition, jealouſy, and revenge could oppoſe to ſentiments

of

of moderation and juſtice, he yet rejected them.—"I behold, ſaid he, the revolt of ſubjects againſt their ſovereign with ſuch horror, that I would chearfully aſſiſt my greateſt enemy to reduce them to ſubjection." To the recollection of America, I would recall the manner in which Spain was reduced from a ſtate of the higheſt proſperity to be a Roman province. That ancient nation, with equal ingratitude and folly, joined her arms to thoſe of Rome, for the purpoſe of humbling Carthage, her ally by the ties of commerce, and of mutual intercourſe and hoſpitality. Carthage was overthrown in the unequal conteſt: but Spain, reduced to the moſt humiliating ſtate of ſervitude to her powerful allies, many degrees more powerful than ever by the ruin of her rival, paid dear for her impolitic conduct. America ſhould likewiſe remember, that the Mexican empire was not ſubverted by the power of Cortez, but by an unnatural confederacy of powerful caziques, and tribes with the Spaniards, againſt their own Emperor. Intending only to make themſelves leſs dependent on their ſovereign, by reducing his power, they loaded themſelves and their wretched poſterity with perpetual ſlavery.—Peru would never have been conquered by all the efforts of Pizarro and his aſſociates, had not the two contending Incas ſeverally invited the arms of the Spaniard to overthrow his brother.

I am, &c. &c.

LETTER XXX.

To J—— M——, Eſq;

Calcutta, Sept. 28, 1779.

I KNOW not whether it would not have been better policy to have colonized Hindoſtan than North America. America was raiſed to its preſent ſtate of grandeur and power, from lofty woods and from deſerts, by the natives of Britain, whoſe induſtry was encouraged by a liberal and profuſe expenditure of Britiſh treaſure, and protected by an unwearied ſupport, againſt the ravages of foreign and inteſtine enemies: and in order to give the coloniſts ſecure and unmoleſted poſſeſſion of the territories they occupied, it became a leading principle in Engliſh policy, to exterminate that ſavage race of men who inherited a property in the ſoil from nature. But Hindoſtan was a country under rich cultivation, flouriſhing in ſtately cities, extenſive villages, and immenſe wealth; inhabited by a numerous and learned people, highly accompliſhed in manners, ſciences, arts, and juriſprudence. A country peopled with ſuch inhabitants, is an acquiſition infinitely greater than any extent of unpeopled territory whatever. To make the acquiſition complete, it is only neceſſary to make the people happy, by a mild ſyſtem of government adapted to their manners, cuſtoms, and educations. Whatever might have been thought of the comparative importance of colonizing North America or Hindoſtan before the eruption of

of the preſent civil war, I think it is not to be doubted at this moment, when we conſider the preſent ſtate and future proſpect of affairs in America, that India is a more inviting ſcene to Britiſh valour, induſtry, and art. I have in my laſt letter given you my reaſons for thinking, that if the Americans were left in poſſeſſion of independency, they would ſoon ſeek for a reconciliation with the parent ſtate, as the ſure and only means of eſcaping from the miſeries of internal convulſion and foreign dominion. Turn your views then, my countrymen, from the weſt to the eaſt; from the ſetting to the riſing ſun. Here is a wide field for every exertion of genius and effort of courage. Here there is ample ſcope for ſpeculation, whether of an abſtracted or leſs refined but more profitable kind; and here you may fight, on advantageous ground, the natural enemies of Britain! Thus it is probable that you may regain your old, and thus it is certain you may raiſe new colonies.

An encreaſe of people would encourage an encreaſe of grain, proviſions, and cloathing. In proportion to this would be the encreaſe of raw materials and manufactured commodities for exportation; which raw materials and manufactured commodities would prove a plentiful ſource of wealth to the Engliſh Eaſt India Company and the Britiſh nation. Hence the riches of Europe would flow, by a natural attraction, into the narrow ſeas; ſince no other country in the world can afford to ſell their labour ſo cheap as the Hindoos, the moſt temperate, perſevering, and ingenious of all the ſons of men.

A country ſo extenſive and fertile as Hindoſtan, that produces two or three crops in the year, is capable of furniſhing more proviſions of all ſorts, than double the preſent population could conſume; and at the ſame time, of continuing ſtill to yield more ſilk, cotton, opium, and ſaltpetre, than the power of an excluſive company will be able to export for the conſumption of Europe, or than private traders can vend in the other parts of Aſia, and the Perſian and Arabian gulphs. Spacious allotments of land might be made to individuals, without any injury whatever to commerce, or the general intereſts of the community. From a ſyſtem of colonization, the greateſt benefits would ariſe to the country of Hindoſtan; and an inexhauſtible ſource of wealth, as well as a new and ſecure channel of private and public remittance, would be opened to Great Britain.

Colonization will prove the beſt means of recovering and re-cultivating the deſerted lands, where opulent cities, populous villages, and high cultivation, once gave life and contentment to millions. The induſtry of coloniſts will drain many of thoſe marſhy tracts of country, the riches of which will abundantly compenſate that labour; while ſecurity will thus be provided to both people and cattle againſt thoſe fierce deſtructive animals with which the depopulated parts of Hindoſtan are at preſent infeſted. The melancholy progreſs of the Sugar-Ants* in the Weſt

* The Weſt-India Sugar-Ants, which are ſo deſtructive to canes, were introduced, it is alledged, in mould or dung brought over from Demerara into

West Indies, seems to threaten the utter destruction of that commodity in the western hemisphere.

At

into Barbadoes by Godfrey Clarke, Esq; father of the late Mr. Clarke of that Island. They have a most voracious appetite for canes, but destroy nothing else, except cattle, and sometimes children.—They attack the stalk and fibres of the canes in the ground, and thus consume its juices, until it decays. They are a very small species of ants, streaked brown and white, having a kind of down over the body, and an acid taste. They dig, if there is soil to permit, several feet deep into the earth, they march in a straight course, and in regular procession; in the nights, mornings, and evenings, and during the intense heat of the sun burrow in the earth, or under some other shade, carrying their young in their mouths; they avoid entering upon land newly turned up, preferring always the beaten track, and shun ashes if strewed in the way; no fire or water will alter their destination, or stop their progress; they will extinguish a fire by the multitude which perish upon it, to pave a passage for the main body; and they watch the bank of a river, till a log of wood, or any other piece or branch of timber crosses between the opposite sides, of which they instantly make a bridge, and transport themselves, continuing their route until they come to a sugar plantation, where they set themselves down, until it is demolished. Thus their motion and progress is very slow. It has been computed, that it will require near an equal number of slaves to resist the destruction of the ants on a plantation, as all the other operations thereof, if the soil and other requisites are naturally good.—From Barbadoes they were first communicated to Martinico, in packages of goods and provisions; and they were brought from Barbadoes to a plantation of Mr. Clark's in Granada, whence they spread to those immediately adjoining, in the course of ten years.—A smuggler from Martinico, in revenge for an injury, brought them in a large bottle from Martinico to the plantation of a French gentleman on the other side of the island, which the owner wisely sold as soon as he could, to Messrs. Bosanquet and Fatro, in London. From these two plantations, they have extended to several neighbouring estates. In like manner they were brought to Tobago from Barbadoes. And from Martinico they have been conveyed to St. Lucia, Guadaloupe, Granadines, and to one plantation only in Dominica.—— Various methods have ineffectually been tried to destroy them. Their senses are so acute, that in whatever method poison is administered, they will quickly discern its pernicious effects, and avoid it. The inhabitants of the French islands of Granada and Tobago, have offered, by ordinances and laws, premiums, exceeding (in the whole) 100,000 l. for the discovery of an effectual mode to eradicate or destroy them.

The sagacity or instinct of the Sugar-Ants will cease to be an object of wonder, when we attend to the astonishing discoveries which have lately been made by Mr. Smeathman concerning the Ants called Termites.

The Termites has generally been reckoned an Ant, and has gone by that general name in our books of natural history; but upon examination, we find the figure of the animals materially different, as well as their

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At any rate, this peſt, by the expence of that labour which is neceſſarily employed in reſiſting it,

way of life. The firſt ſtate of the Termites is that of labourers; they then become ſoldiers; in this their bulk is increaſed, and they become quite uſeleſs for all the purpoſes of labour; in their laſt ſtage they get wings, which, however, ſoon fall off, when they become a prey to the fowls, or the inhabitants of the country, who reckon them excellent food. It is from among theſe that the queen is choſen by a body of wandering labourers. In the ſtate we deſcribe, they are very ſmall, not exceeding in ſize the common ant of this country. This is the ſtate of exiſtence in which they perform their chief operations, and it is in this they are to be conſidered as moſt perfect, as in it they fulfil all the purpoſes of their exiſtence.—Like the Ant, theſe animals aſſemble in large ſocieties, where every individual not only obeys the laws, but contributes his ſhare to ſupply the neceſſities or conveniencies of the whole body. The working-Termites in this ſtate is called by Mr. Smeathman, the labourers, for they build the habitations, and perform the other laborious offices of the ſociety. Theſe labourers, like the working-bees, are neither male nor female; which ſeems, in both caſes, a wiſe regulation in nature. Love, which creates ſo many diviſions amongſt the more ſolitary animals, would quite interrupt the neceſſary duties of ſuch an extenſive republic. As their hearts are affected by no impulſe but the general good, the common offices are performed with regularity and care. Beſides theſe labourers there is another kind of Termites, much larger, which carry a forceps as an offenſive weapon; theſe Termites overſee the labourers at work, and protect the habitation from the inſults of other animals; on this account they are called by Mr. Smeathman the ſoldiers. As far as we know, theſe have no other uſe, for they can neither work nor propagate their ſpecies. The queen, from whoſe prolific body all the others ariſe, is next to be conſidered: She originally enjoyed no ſuperiority over the other female Termites, who in a certain ſtate, like the bees, leave their habitations in ſearch of others; but by chance, with many of her companions, ſhe is met by a body of wandering labourers, who immediately elect her out of the multitude for their ſovereign, while the reſt are left to wander till they are picked up by the inhabitants, or by other animals. The queen ſo choſen is put into the royal apartment, which is about the middle of the habitation. This room is fitted to her ſize, arched above, with a plain ſurface below. In order to impregnate her majeſty, ſeveral males are choſen by the workers, and ſhut up along with her: the other males that remain are expelled the ſociety, or put to death as a burthen altogether unneceſſary. So far will ſound policy conquer humanity in other breaſts than ours.—Having given ſome idea of the labourers, the ſoldiers, the queen, and her males, it will next be proper to ſay ſomething of their aſtoniſhing habitations. Theſe are very common in Africa, the Weſt India iſlands, Braſil, and other parts of South America. They are of very different ſizes, according to their age, the ſtate of the republic, and other circumſtances: their height is often inconſiderable, though frequently they are found to riſe in a conical figure to no leſs than fourteen, ſixteen,

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it, will, in all probability, raiſe the price of Sugar to ſuch a height, that other countries muſt be reſorted

or even eighteen feet, with a baſe in good proportion to the other parts. If we compare their bulk to that of men, how vaſtly ſuperior muſt we allow ſuch a building to be to any of our greateſt works!—Shall we ſtill ſay, that thoſe hands which collected and formed, prepared and applied ſuch proper materials, were moved by inſtinct alone? that thoſe heads which could direct ſuch an immenſe work, which could vary it as circumſtances were changed, which could alter it with the nature of the ground, and repair every injury in the ſhorteſt and beſt manner—ſhall we ſay that thoſe heads were illuminated with no rays of reaſon; that they could not reflect or compare, compound or decompound their ideas?—Theſe buildings are compoſed of earthy parts, united in ſuch a manner with vegetable juices, that the compound exactly reſembles a ſtone. When ſeveral of ſuch happen to be united, the maſs ſo formed is very conſiderable; and it is common to ſee the cattle aſcend them, to view what is going on in the diſtant country. This they can do without doing the leaſt injury to the buildings, ſo hard and well-formed they are in all thoſe parts where injuries might be received. The ingenious Mr. Smeathman has firſt given a proper account of the internal ſtructure of theſe buildings, which was difficult to be done, if we conſider the hardneſs of their walls, and the bravery of the ſoldiers who defend them. He ſays, that upon firſt offering any violence to the ſtructure, a few ſoldiers make their appearance, who run about with every mark of anxiety and rage in ſearch of the aggreſſor: more troops ſoon appear, till at length the whole multitude is in commotion. They aſſail the enemy with their forceps, and will kill the largeſt animals that perſiſt in offending them. When their enemy has diſappeared, they carefully examine the injury they have ſuſtained; the labourers immediately collect materials to repair the damage: while they are at work, a ſoldier is ſet over them, who now and then makes a ſort of ſhrill noiſe, which continues ſome ſeconds; when this commences, the workmen who were beginning to turn languid in their operations, with one ſoul increaſe their effort, till fatigue again requires another ſtimulus.—In the ſame way our ſailors are animated with their mutual ſhouts; and I ſuppoſe for the ſame reaſon, the oxen move with greater alacrity by the plowman's whiſtle, or the Italian mule with his bell.—The moſt remarkable part of the inner building, is the room where the queen is lodged: ſhe is put in here at firſt no larger than a common ant, but after being impregnated, her body ſwells to a much greater ſize, while the head ſtill remains as before. An old queen will often be an inch or more in circumference, with length in proportion, ſo that we find her apartment increaſed to a diameter of ſeveral inches, with a ſuitable height. From this room there are ſeveral paſſages for her attendants, which communicate with a vaſt number of cells that ſurround it. Theſe domeſtics, to the number of many thouſands, are employed in nothing but waiting on the queen. Some of them bring her food, while the reſt are ſufficiently employed in carrying away the ova which ſhe continually depoſits, to the cells already mentioned. Theſe offices are abſolutely neceſſary, for there

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reſorted to for its cultivation. The ſearch is over. The country is already in our poſſeſſion, of which the ſugar-plant is a native, and where the expence of raiſing and converting it into ſugar will be ſo far below that which attended its culture in the Weſt Indies, that after allowing a generous freight equal to time, diſtance, and other

is no paſſage left ſufficiently large to let the queen out of her room, where ſhe remains conſtantly from her firſt entrance. The number of ova which a queen will depoſit in a minute, exceeds all belief. As the bulk of this chamber is ſmall in proportion to the number of domeſtics it always contains, and as ſome of them are going from the entrances to the queen, while others are moving in a contrary direction, great confuſion might be occaſioned, did they not wiſely avoid it, by forming themſelves into a ſpiral troop, ſo that every one before he can arrive at the door from the queen, muſt deſcribe the whole line. The nurſery, which ſurrounds the queen's chamber, is made up of a vaſt number of cells for the reception of the ova, where they are depoſited by the queen's attendants. In the walls of the buildings, there is a kind of covered way formed, by which the inhabitants aſcend to the top of it, or to any height they may incline; as they cannot adhere to a ſurface like a fly, they have inclined this paſſage at a convenient angle for walking. This communicates with the other cells, rooms, or paſſages, ſo that the whole body can on any emergency transfer themſelves to any part.

The numerous tribes of the animals we have been deſcribing, were not ſurely made to anſwer no end, or as ſome have been tempted to imagine, only to anſwer a bad one. It is true, the planter in the Weſt Indies is nearly ruined by the ravages they make—premiums have been offered for a method to deſtroy theſe deſtructive ants, as they are called. Vegetable ſubſtances when once deprived of the principle of life, are ſure to be attacked by them, if in the neighbourhood of their edifices, from which they make excurſions in hollow ways, formed of the ſame materials with their other works. They will reduce a houſe almoſt to powder in a few hours, by perforating, in a thouſand directions, the timber that covers and ſupports it. Mr. Smeathman ſays, that he has ſeen a cheſt with its contents, in a ſhort time ſo pierced and eaten with theſe inſects, that it retained its former figure, though little of either its original weight or ſubſtance. In Africa, the houſes are very frequently entirely carried away, and every thing in them.

But theſe animals alſo produce good effects, by reducing to earth, the vegetable ſubſtances which ariſe ſo faſt and in ſuch quantities in that luxuriant ſoil. Putridity, when in conjunction with moiſture and heat, is known to cauſe fevers of the worſt ſort in the equatorial countries. Without the Termites, the Muſquettoes, which alſo prevent this putridity, and other animals of the like kind, we may venture to aſſert, that a large proportion of the habitable world would be quite unfit for the purpoſes of animal, or perhaps vegetable life.

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circumſtances, it will abundantly compenſate the planter, and yield a moſt beneficial remittance.

Every ſpecies of improvement, which affords liberal encouragement to labour and induſtry, will tend to retain the natives at home, and operate as a voluntary barrier againſt emigration. By introducing a new branch of commerce, it will retain annually above 250,000l. ſterling in circulation, which is now ſent in ſpecie to pay for ſugar and arrack to the Dutch in Batavia, for the conſumption of Bengal, and the coaſts of Coromandel, Malabar, and Guzarat; and contribute to render the whole country leſs dependent on foreigners for common ſupplies.

The indigo ſhrub is alſo a native of this country; and the quality of its indigo, under the diſadvantage of a total ignorance of the proper method of manufacturing it, ſhews what it is capable of being made by due management. The exportation of this commodity to Britain, will be more beneficial in every reſpect to the exporter and planter than the ſugar; beſides that it will render the Britiſh manufacturer leſs dependent for that neceſſary article on North America, France, and Spain. As to cocoa, it may be raiſed in the plains of Hindoſtan in ſuch quantities and at ſo ſmall an expence, as to annihilate the balance which the conſumption of chocolate creates againſt Britain in the ſcale of trade. The ſoil and climate of India, together with the perſevering aſſiduity of the natives, applying themſelves according to their reſpective families, to diſtinct or particular branches of labour, ſeem naturally adapted to the culture of the cochineal

neal inſect. If no fortunate caſualty in politics ſhall put the Britiſh nation in poſſeſſion of the iſland of Ceylon (a ſpot not more deſirable for the vaſt wealth it yields, than for its poſition and harbour, ſo excellently adapted for the protection of a navy at all ſeaſons, and conſequently for the defence of all India) the ſouthern parts of the Carnatic, which have already ſome, are capable of producing abundance of cinnamon of the very beſt quality. In ſhort, it were vain to attempt an enumeration of the various articles of ſubſiſtence and of trade, which the famed peninſula of Hindoſtan is capable of yielding to a liberal and wiſe guardian, in cattle, flocks, grain, cloths, ſalts, ores, drugs, gems, &c. &c. Induſtry and common underſtanding, with the protection of perſon and property, would undoubtedly make it a gain what the Orientaliſts ſtiled it of old, The Paradiſe of Nations.

India, reſtored to a reſemblance of what it was, will open its rich ſluices, and with a ſtrong attractive power, draw, in barter for its commodities, ſuch ſupplies of precious metals from European, African, and Aſiatic nations, that the credit of the protecting power will co-operate with the grateful feelings of a happy people, to give effectual currency to bank notes in circulation: whence a new fund of ſolid gain will flow into the Company's, and thence into the national treaſure.—But to give the greateſt poſſible encouragement to general induſtry, for the improvement of agriculture, and for the promotion of manufactures and commerce, a general bank ſhould be eſtabliſhed, with a treaſury and mint,

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on a new and extenſive ſcale, and upon liberal principles, equally uſeful to the country and to the proprietors. In order to ſhew the happy conſequences ariſing from a free and eaſy uſe of money, in the country of which I now ſpeak, let me now mention an anecdote which I heard from a Mr. Wood (with whom I happened accidentally to be in company) a free merchant of Decca.—Mr. Wood, coming from Decca to Calcutta through a large tract of uncultivated and marſhy woods, which renders that navigation both tedious and dangerous, chanced to fall in with a poor native wood-cutter. In the courſe of converſation, the poor man ſaid, that if he had but fifty rupees (five pounds) he could make a comfortable ſettlement. The fifty rupees Mr. Wood lent him. When Mr. Wood, after ſtaying ſome time at Calcutta, returned to Decca, he ſaw the effects of his bounty in an advanced ſettlement on a ſmall eminence, newly cleared from ſtanding trees. Unſolicited, he lent the wood-cutter fifty rupees more. The next voyage, Mr. Wood was delighted to behold the rapid progreſs of the ſettlement, and aſtoniſhed to meet the wood-cutter offering to repay half the ſmall but generous loan. Mr. Wood refuſed to receive it at that time, and lent one hundred rupees more. About eighteen months after the commencement of the ſettlement, Mr. Wood had the inexpreſſible ſatisfaction of ſeeing his poor wood-cutter at the head of five populous villages, and a ſpacious tract of fine land under cultivation; drained and cleared of ſwamps and woods. The wood-cutter repayed the principal of the ſmall

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ſum he had borrowed, and tendered the intereſt, while tears of gratitude and humble affection, trickled down his venerable but ſmiling countenance.

LETTER XXXI.

To J——— M———, Eſq; London.

Calcutta, 1ſt *October*, 1779.

IN this celebrated land, ſo abundant in objects of curioſity, a ſtranger is particularly ſtruck with cuſtoms, manners, and opinions, whoſe origin lies buried in the depths of an unfathomable antiquity. But the moſt ſtriking features in the character of the Hindoos, are their ſuperſtitions, and veneration for the inſtitutions and tenets of their forefathers. In India, the dominion of religion extends to a thouſand particulars, which in other countries are governed either by the civil laws, or by taſte, cuſtom, or faſhion. Dreſs, food, the common intercourſes of life, marriages, profeſſions, all are under the juriſdiction of religion. There is ſcarcely any thing which is not regulated by ſuperſtition. It preſcribes rules of conduct in all circumſtances and ſituations; nor is there any thing almoſt ſo trifling and minute as to be conſidered as a matter of indifference. The original government of the Hindoos, was in reality an hierarchy; for among that religious people, the higheſt authority was poſſeſſed by the prieſthood, or the Brahmin caſt, a tribe of prieſts like

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that of Levi among the Jews. Nor is it in this inſtance only, that we find a reſemblance between the natives of India and that ſingular people I have juſt now mentioned. Not only were the governments of both nations hierarchical, but in both there was a vaſt variety of religious obſervances and ceremonies extending to many particulars, which in other countries are matters of choice or of indifference; and both entertained the moſt profound reſpect and veneration for their anceſtors.

In European nations there is a love of novelty, and an ardour of improvement, which leads to a contempt of paſt times, and a high eſtimation of the preſent. In Aſia, particularly in India, both on this ſide and beyond the Ganges, there is a ſcrupulous tenacity of ancient cuſtoms and manners; and the object of emulation is, not to invent any thing new, but to preſerve in their original purity, the uſages and the doctrines of the moſt remote antiquity. I know not whether there be not a certain connection between this diſpoſition, and that turn which prevails in India, not towards invention or deſign, but to imitation. In arts of this laſt kind, the Hindoos are ſo dextrous, that the original model is not to be diſtinguiſhed from the new production, in any kind of cloth, metal, wood, or ſtone. For works of imitation, their nature ſeems peculiarly fitted, by that patient perſeverance which ſo eminently diſtinguiſhes them; and by another quality, if it be another, which is, that they are wholly occupied and abſorbed in the preſent object. No diſtraction of thought, no wandering of imagination: the

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force of their mind, by means of fixed attention is brought to bear, as it were, againſt one place; it is brought to a centre of percuſſion. And with all this perſeverance and ſtraining of attention, they preſerve an evenneſs of ſpirits, which are never much elevated but by the power of opium, or other intoxicating herbs, but never depreſſed by ſuch labour as is ſuited to their bodily frames and conſtitutions. The tranquillity of their minds, even in the moſt trying circumſtances, is expreſſed by a conſtant ſmile that ſits gracefully on their placid countenances.

I have often had occaſion to animadvert on the partial and falſe notions entertained in Europe, that all other nations in the world are barbarians. Under the idea of heatheniſm, the Europeans comprehend barbarous cuſtoms, manners, and laws, and ideas unworthy of the attributes of the Supreme Being.—I confeſs, that in my opinion, the charge of barbariſm might juſtly be retorted on the arrogant natives of Europe, by moſt nations in the world. I have had occaſion to ſee and to converſe with various tribes of thoſe nations that are denominated, not barbarous, but even ſavage, on the continent and in the iſlands of America, and have had accurate information concerning many nations in Africa. I have ſeen or had exact information of the principles and manners of many nations in Aſia, and the Aſiatic and African iſlands; and I have not a doubt in my mind, that the nations of Europe are more ſavage than any of all theſe; if by the term ſavage, I may be allowed to underſtand oppreſſion, cruelty, and injuſtice. That people, in

in my opinion, have the beſt title to the praiſe of civilization and refinement, who are the moſt humane, courteous, and juſt in the intercourſes of ſocial life. A nation may be poſſeſſed of an high degree of refinement in the arts and ſciences, and with regard to the great art of life, which conſiſts in the practice of virtue, may be mere barbarians†. In Europe the progreſs of vice has kept pace with that of knowledge. If the people of the eaſt and weſt have refined in policy, and conſequently degenerated from the original purity of their morals, they have done ſo from neceſſity. They found treachery, cunning, diſſimulation, with other vices, neceſſary to ſecure their perſons and property againſt the oppreſſions and various machinations of emigrants from Europe.

All hiſtory points to India as the mother of ſcience and art. This country was anciently ſo renowned for knowledge and wiſdom, that the philoſophers of Greece did not diſdain to travel thither for their improvement; and imported thence many notions, which they incorporated with their ſyſtems of philoſophy. Pythagoras, Democritus, Anaxarchus, Pyrrho, Apollonius, and others, went to India in order to converſe with the Brahmins of that country; whom, from the nature of their garments, which left a great part of their bodies uncovered, they called gymnoſophiſts, or the naked philoſophers.

It

† Whether the progreſs of civilization contributes, on the whole, to the improvement of virtue and the advancement of happineſs, is a queſtion which has furniſhed of late an ample field of ſpeculation. The greateſt

It appears, from the concurring teſtimony of ancient writers, that the Brahmins of India, about

greateſt part of ſpeculative reaſoners, heſitate not to aſcribe to the progreſs of ſcience and of art, whatever is deſirable, graceful, and noble in human life; while others decry this progreſs as the fertile ſource of infelicity, debaſement, and corruption. This laſt opinion is generally conſidered as whimſical, although it has been maintained by the genius and pathetic eloquence of Rouſſeau. Indeed, it muſt be allowed, that on this head Rouſſeau is ſomewhat extravagant; although not ſo extravagant as thoſe who repreſent mankind in the firſt ſtage of ſociety, merely as animals roaming through woods and deſerts in queſt of prey, devoid of all fidelity, benevolent inſtinct, and ſocial love.

The learned and ſagacious author of 'Eſſays on the Hiſtory of Mankind in rude and cultivated Ages,' is of opinion, that here, as in many other caſes, the truth will be found to lie between two extremes: and that the beneficial influence of the progreſs in queſtion, "is real, yet far inferior to what the panegyriſts of ſcience and art have repreſented it to be; and juſt barely enough to reward that continual purſuit which it ſolicits from every nation once engaged in this career."

The epithets barbarous and civilized, ſays the ſame ingenious advocate for the dignity of human nature, "occur ſo frequently in converſation and in books, that whoever employs his thoughts in contemplation of the manners and hiſtory of mankind, will have occaſion to conſider, with ſome attention, both what ideas theſe words are commonly meant to convey, and in what ſenſe they ought to be employed by the hiſtorian, and moral philoſopher.

"It is of ſome importance ſurely, in every diſcuſſion relative to human affairs, to have aſcertained before-hand, what are thoſe qualities in the manners and characters of different nations, which, according to the eſtimation of reaſon, after an impartial ſurvey of mankind, as they are and have been, may juſtify the impoſition of names implying almoſt unlimited cenſure or applauſe.

"Perhaps, on examination, it will not appear that any ſimple criterion of civilization and barbarity, taken either from laws, or manners, or any other circumſtance in human affairs, can be fixed upon, as correſponding to the general uſe which is made of theſe terms, and fitted to explain their application in particular caſes.

"That civilization, ſo highly extolled, is plainly underſtood, by its admirers, to be ſomewhat of a mixed and complicated nature, comprehending various conſtituent parts, ſome eſſential to its very exiſtence, ſome only acceſſary and ornamental. In the total abſence of the former of theſe, Barbarity, according to the general acceptation of the word, ſeems to be underſtood to conſiſt.

"Warm and ſteady affections in private life, an honourable fidelity to engagements, whether expreſs or implied, the order of internal laws, equity and humanity in their conduct towards ſtrangers, and foreign nations, will be inſiſted upon by all, as eſſential to the character of a civilized people. The ſciences and fine

arts,

about two thouſand years ago, lived innocent, pure, and auſtere lives, abſtaining from wine and

arts, though not indiſpenſably eſſential, muſt be eſteemed very requiſite: yet is not their influence exempted from ſome uncertainty and ſuſpicion. The cultivation of real ſcience, the love and ſtudy of the fine arts, while uncorrupted, add, no doubt, to the politeneſs, and improve the enjoyments, of civilized nations; but an attachment to falſe ſciences (ſeveral of which, like aſtrology and magic, unſuſpected while they flouriſh, have prevailed, and perhaps prevail) or a paſſion for ſpurious and groteſque imitations of the fine arts, as pantomimes, puppet-ſhows, maſquerades, or the laboured decorations of gardens and parterres, cannot improve and may degrade, in a certain degree, the character of thoſe nations by whom they are cheriſhed.

"The vulgar and commercial arts, ſubſervient to the plenty, accommodation, and elegance of ordinary life, ſeem almoſt of an indifferent nature.

"Although by thoſe the manners of civilized nations may be embelliſhed, yet the higheſt degrees of generous virtue, and the trueſt politeneſs of mind, may be found among nations to whom theſe arts are almoſt totally unknown.

"If this be a full enumeration of the qualities which, in the general ſenſe of mankind, are underſtood to conſtitute civilized manners, and a juſt account of their reſpective importance; it deſerves to be adverted to, that no nation has ever poſſeſſed them all in their higheſt excellence, nor has any ſubſiſted as a people (ſhort periods of convulſion and anarchy excepted) without a very conſiderable degree of one or more of thoſe which are to be accounted moſt eſſential.

"Were it not then better to ſet aſide from correct reaſoning, the too general terms of barbarous and civilized, ſubſtituting in their room expreſſions of more definite cenſure and approbation?

"Indeed the common acceptation of theſe words is founded upon a very general, but very falſe and partial opinion of the ſtate of mankind. It ſuppoſes that the difference between one nation and another may be prodigiouſly great; and ſome happy and diſtinguiſhed tribes of men are, in all reſpects, generous, liberal, refined, and humane; while others, from their hard fate, or their perverſeneſs, remain in all reſpects illiberal, miſchievous, and rude.

"This general ſuppoſition with regard to the condition of human nature, is implied in that opinion of their own ſuperiority over other nations, which Europeans are prone to entertain: a ſuperiority which, like that aſſumed by the Greeks, the Romans, and the Chineſe, is ſuppoſed by thoſe who claim it, to be abſolute and immenſe; yet, if brought to the ſtandard of virtue and felicity, it may appear very inconſiderable in reſpect of the populous Aſiatic nations, who have flouriſhed long under extenſive monarchies; and not very great in reſpect even of the ſimpleſt and rudeſt race of men, inhabiting the frozen ſhores of Greenland, or placed beneath the fervour of a vertical Sun, along the Guinea coaſt, or on the banks of the Oronoco.

and animal food; and, as much as poſſible, from all ſenſual enjoyment. They ſhunned the contagious

" It ought to be ſuppoſed that, if other nations were as far inferior to us, as we are willing to imagine, their condition would evidently tend to decay and extermination. With regard to the inferior orders of being, both animal and vegetable, it ſeems to be a law of nature, that, wherever they cannot attain, in ſome very conſiderable degree, the honours, if I may ſo ſpeak, and the emoluments of their exiſtence, there they gradually decline, and at laſt ceaſe to exiſt at all. Is man an exemption from the general law? or may it not rather be believed, that wherever any tribe of mankind ſubſiſt, and do not manifeſtly decay and haſten to extermination, there, though appearances belie it, they muſt have attained a meaſure of worth and of felicity not much inferior to that which the moſt admired nations have actually attained?"

Doctor Dunbar gives the following natural, and I had almoſt ſaid flattering account of the origin of civil ſociety: With ſimilar appetites and congenial paſſions, the excurſions of individuals will often coincide. They will be found occaſionally on the banks of the ſame river, or in the ſame corner of the grove. The reiterated appearance of the objects ſlowly and imperceptibly calls forth new deſires. Each interview has its effect. The brutality of the ſavage begins to vaniſh. Some refinement appears. An appetite for ſociety ripens, which afterwards muſt be gratified as well as other appetites. Little plans are carried on in concert; and at a time when no diſcordant intereſts, or various purſuits, had diverſified the ſcene, a ſmall community might be kept together by the tie of ſociability and reciprocal love.

" In theſe days of envy, and of intereſt, we are little able to conceive its force; nor, if the feelings remained, could artificial language, in this reſpect, ſupply the language of nature. When ſimilar functions and occupations in civil ſociety prove ſo often a bond of union among thoſe of the ſame order, how immenſe muſt have been the effect of an exact conformity of life! That reſemblance of diſpoſition and of character, which is the cement of little aſſociations, and is the principle of private friendſhip, was the original baſis of public union. The hiſtory of the Soldurii in Gaul, of the ancient Germans, and of other public bodies, of which there are ſo many examples in the ſimple ages, evidences the ſtability of thoſe ſacred bonds and confederacies that originate in the heart. The hiſtory too of ſome of the South Sea iſles, which the late voyages of diſcovery have tended to diſcloſe, enables us to glance at ſociety in ſome of its earlier forms, and to mark, in ſome ſtriking examples, the inviolable fidelity of ſocial love.

" The principles of union are, in the order of things, prior to the principles of hoſtility. The former are, in truth, productive of the latter, which, in a more advanced period, burſting forth, like a torrent, againſt other tribes, diſfigure the character of uncivilized nations."

Although this author ſteers a courſe between Rouſſeau on the one hand, and the degrading Dean of Glouceſter on the other, yet it is evident that he approaches much nearer to the paths of the former than to thoſe of the latter;

tagious example of a world ſunk in corruption, and endeavoured to ſhelter their feeble virtue by retirement in caves and woods, where they ſubſiſted on the ſpontaneous productions of the earth.

Their moral principles were the moſt ſublime that could be imagined. The grand concern of human life, was the attainment of wiſdom; by which they underſtood, moral wiſdom or virtue. In the practice of this, they were indifferent to pleaſure or pain, to life or death. For the preſent life, according to the primitive Brahmins, was but the commencement of our exiſtence. The ſoul after death returned to God, from whom it ſprang, and who would beſtow eternal life and happineſs on the good, but inflict on the wicked different degrees of puniſhment. They believed, that the ſouls of men migrated after death into different animal bodies, until having done penance in this manner for their ſins, and being purified from evil habits and deſires, they were made fit for a more immediate communication with the eternal and divine Father of ſpirits, and ſource of all happineſs. Man, they affirmed, carried about with him, in his own body, enemies which it was his buſineſs continually to

latter; for he admits, that the moſt improved and refined nations very little excel in felicity or worth the ſimpleſt and rudeſt tribes of men.—Nay, he ſays further, that, "our voyages of diſcovery, which in ſome reſpects are ſo honourable, and calculated for noble ends, have never yet been happy for any of the tribes of mankind viſited by us."

It has been my fate in the courſe of a life full of viciſſitudes and diſappointments, to have viſited many different nations in all the quarters of the world; and all that I have heard or ſeen, confirms the ſentiments now quoted from the reſpectable author of "Eſſays on the Hiſtory of Mankind."

combat, evil deſires and inclinations; by conquering which, it was, that he prepared for himſelf a favourable reception in the heavenly manſions.

Such are the accounts that are given by the writers of antiquity, of this ſingular tribe. And it is eaſy to perceive how much their tenets coincided at leaſt, if they did not give birth to the metempſychoſis of Pythagoras, and the divine origin and immortality of the ſoul—doctrines maintained by the ſublimeſt reaſoning in the writings of Plato—and the idea under which the ſame noble author conſiders that oppoſition which is felt between reaſon and paſſion; which is, that the rational ſoul is chained to a furious monſter, and that all his endeavours ſhould be bent to cut the chain that binds them together, and to procure its own emancipation. The two ſelfs or ſouls of Xenophon, is a doctrine of the ſame kind: and every man muſt be ſtruck with the remarkable coincidence there is between theſe two figures of Plato and Xenophon, and that bold allegory of an old and new man, which we find in the inſpired writings of St. Paul. It is, in my opinion, a reproach to the preſent age, and in general to modern times, that, notwithſtanding the advancement of commerce, and the facility of intercourſe which is thereby opened with the tribes of India, the ſentiments of the Brahmins of the preſent, are not ſo well underſtood as were thoſe of the ſame order in ancient times. Emigrants from Europe travel now into the eaſt, not in ſearch of knowledge but of gold; and they are of a very different opinion from Solomon,

mon, who maintains that wiſdom is better than rubies. I cannot help thinking that the genius of modern times, though more accurate, is leſs ſublime than that of antiquity; and withal, more dogmatical, and leſs open to conviction. The nature of the elements; the origin and end of all things; the nature of the human ſoul; the ſupreme good and chief glory of man, theſe, with other grand and important ſubjects, exerciſed the mental powers of antient ſages; who did not confine their reſearches to one particular object, to the humble purſuits of a botaniſt, nor even to the more exalted views of a geometrician; but who, taking a bold and extenſive flight over both animated and inanimated matter, combined different ideas by various analogies; ever intent to deduce from the whole, truths more and more abſtracted and ſublime, whence they might draw practical rules for the conduct of life. In the purſuit of theſe objects, they ſpared neither time, labour, or expence. We may form an idea of that ardent deſire of knowledge which inſpired the breaſts of thoſe antient enquirers into truth, from the journey of Pythagoras into Egypt and India; his long reſidence in the former country; his patient ſolicitation, after repeated repulſes and evaſions, to be admitted to a knowledge of the myſteries of the prieſts; and by his ſubmitting himſelf, for that purpoſe, to the painful rite of circumciſion. When we compare the ardour of this man's curioſity, and the variety and extent of his views, with the ſedentary and limited occupations of modern Connoſcenti; is it difficult to determine, which of the two beſt deſerves

ſerves the name of philoſopher? One man of leiſure, and without much avarice or ambition, purchaſes a teleſcope, with which he ſtares at the full moon, or makes ſome obſervations that have been made a thouſand times before him, by way of confirming a theory, which at the ſame time he ſuppoſes to ſtand in no need of confirmation. Another buys a microſcope; by means of which he diſcovers ſome ſmall veſſel or gland, or perhaps, as he may fancy, ſome inſect inviſible to the human eye, whence a diſpute will in all probability ariſe, whether it be, after all, an animal or only a particle of matter†. A third, on ſome remote coaſt, or unfrequented mountain, obſerves a plant which has neither been deſcribed by the moſt ingenious Buffon, nor by that Nomenclator Linnæus. Theſe gentlemen communicate their diſcoveries to philoſophers licenſed by public authority; and ſtraightway their obſcure names ſwell the liſts of members of ſuch or ſuch an academy, andof Fellows of the Royal Society. Such is the taſte of the preſent times. We have our Græviuſes and our Burmanni, as well as the laſt century had theirs, whoſe microſcopic eyes take in narrow objects, but are never ſufficiently opened to admit the images of ſuch as are grand and extenſive. Many ſubjects of importance remain unexplored, while trifles are magnified into mighty concerns, and diſcuſſed with minute attention.—But I return from this digreſſion to the Indian Brahmins.

† This is now the caſe with Lewenhoek's Animalculi Seminales.

Although

Although we are not ſo well acquainted with the hiſtory of the modern Brahmins of India, as might be expected, from the enlarged knowledge, commerce, and curioſity of the preſent times; yet we know enough of this tribe, to conclude with certainty, that they have degenerated much from the purity of their anceſtors. I know not whether ſuch calculators as Doctor Price, might not be able, from the preſent corrupt ſtate of the Brahmins, to compute the time of the firſt inſtitution of that order. All religious ſectaries, in the courſe of time, degenerate from the auſtere virtues of their firſt heads or leaders. Chriſtians in general, and alſo the particular ſects of Chriſtianity, bear witneſs to the truth of this poſition: with this data, I doubt not but an ingenious calculator might inveſtigate the age of the order of Brahmins, and conſequently that of the Hindoo empire, with which that claſs of men was no doubt coeval.

I have already given a ſhort ſketch of what the Indian prieſts were near two thouſand years ago. In the preſent times it is aſſerted, that European uſurpers ſometimes make uſe even of the Brahmins as tools of oppreſſion, and as inſtruments of plunder. But whatever their lives be, their doctrine is on the whole yet pure and excellent: for among ſeveral errors, they maintain thoſe truths which form the harmony of the world, "There is one ſupreme God, and that he is delighted with charity and good works more than by all other ſacrifices." In general their religious tenets are very conſiſtent with the ideas which are entertained of the Divinity in Europe. Many

ny ſuperſtitious practices have indeed been introduced among the generality of the people. Wooden images are placed in all their temples, and on certain feſtivals are exhibited on the high roads and in the ſtreets of the towns. Theſe have impreſſed ſtrangers with a notion that the Gentoos are idolaters; when in truth the homage they pay with their images, is preciſely of the ſame kind with that which the Roman Catholics yield to the images of our Saviour and the ſaints, which are only meant to awaken attention, and to give livelier ideas of the objects of their devotion. This I have been repeatedly told by Gentoos, in whoſe judgment and veracity I repoſe great confidence. The images of which I ſpeak, are various, and often monſtrous in their forms. They are figures intended to adumbrate the attributes of the Deity by viſible repreſentations of their effects, which appears in the works of creation and providence. Thus far only the Gentoos are idolaters, and in worſhipping the great God of the univerſe, they place before their bodily eyes, for the information of their minds, ſuch repreſentations as are calculated to recall, in a vivid manner to their imaginations, thoſe attributes which they believe that Almighty being only to poſſeſs.

The Hindoos, as well as the Perſians, Tartars, and adjoining nations, who have inhabited Hindoſtan ſince it was conquered by Tamerlane or Timurbeg, though of different nations, religions, laws, and cuſtoms, poſſeſs nevertheleſs, in equal degrees, hoſpitality, politeneſs, and addreſs. In refinement and eaſe they are ſuperior

rior to any people to the weſtward of them. In politeneſs and addreſs, in gracefulneſs of deportment, and ſpeech, an Italian is as much ſuperior to a Frenchman of faſhion, as a French courtier is to a Dutch burgo-maſter of Dort†. A Frenchman is indeed by no means deficient in eaſe of carriage, but that eaſe is mixed with forward familiarity, with confidence, and ſelf-conceit, The Hindoos, eſpecially thoſe of the higher Caſtes, are in their demeanour eaſy and unconſtrained, ſtill more than even a French courtier; but their eaſe and freedom is reſerved, modeſt, and reſpectful. A Frenchman is polite becauſe he thinks it his honour to be polite: an Indian, becauſe he thinks it his duty. The former is polite becauſe he regards himſelf; the latter becauſe he reſpects you.

Their perſons are ſtraight and elegant, their limbs finely proportioned, their fingers long and tapering, their countenances open and pleaſant, and their features exhibit the moſt delicate lines of beauty in the females, and in the males a kind of manly ſoftneſs. Their walk and gait, as well as their whole deportment, is in the higheſt degree graceful. The dreſs of the men is a kind of cloſe-bodied gown, like our women's gowns, and wide trowſers, reſembling petticoats, reaching down to their ſlippers. Such of the women as appear in public, have ſhawls over their heads and ſhoulders‡, ſhort cloſe jackets, and tight

† The leaſt poliſhed of all the towns in Holland.

‡ Somewhat reſembling the plaids of N. Britain, and the black veils of Brabant.

drawers

drawers which come down to their ancles. Hence the dreſs of the men gives them in the eyes of Europeans, an appearance of effeminacy; whereas that of the women will appear rather maſculine: ſuch is the influence of manner and cuſtom on human ſentiments; an influence which extends not merely to matters of taſte, but, as the ingenious Doctor Smith, in his "Theory of Moral Sentiments," obſerves, to objects of higher importance.

Many of the original Hindoo tribes or Caſtes†, moſt or all the deſcendants of Moors, as well as the emigrants which pour in great ſwarms into India, from Perſia and the adjacent countries, are brave, intrepid, and cool in battle.—Having the ſame weapons, and under ſimilar diſcipline, why ſhould they not be a match for men of the ſame country and complexion with themſelves, although thoſe men are under the auſpices of foreign nations?—The advantage of theſe auſpices may doubtleſs be counterbalanced by ſuperiority of numbers, and other favourable circumſtances, which it is needleſs to enumerate. Theſe are ſerious and important objects of public conſideration: a neglect of which has already produced the moſt alarming loſſes in revenue, and diſadvantages in trade, and ſeems indeed to threaten the extinction of the preſent East India Company.

From the difference of Caſtes or claſſes of the people in Hindoſtan, I mean the original inhabitants, there ariſes a difference of education and

† Caſte is a Portugueſe word, importing a claſs or tribe.

dreſs.

dreſs. But even the inferior claſſes are taught reading, writing, and arithmetic: the youth are taught, not within doors, but in the open air; and it is a ſingular, but not unpleaſing ſpectacle, to behold, in every village, a venerable old man, reclined on a terraced plain, teaching a number of ſurrounding boys, who regard him with the utmoſt reverence and attention, like a ſhepherd feeding his flock. In thoſe ſimple ſeminaries, where the want of magnificent halls and theatres is divinely compenſated by the ſpacious canopy of Heaven, the gentle and tractable ſons of the Hindoos are not only prepared for the buſineſs, but inſtructed in the duties of life; a profound veneration for the object or objects of religious worſhip; reverence of their parents; reſpect for their ſeniors; juſtice and humanity towards all men, but a particular affection for thoſe of their own Caſte.

The Hindoo language is beautiful, expreſſive, and nervous. In reading and ſpeaking, the Hindoos are very muſical. Their ſpeech, like that of the Italians, flows in a kind of numbers. There is a dead language, underſtood only by the literati of the country, that is, the prieſts, called the Sanſcrit language, in which their ſacred volumes are written, even as our ſacred ſcriptures are written, in Greek and Hebrew. But whether that language was originally different from that of the country, or whether it has only now become unintelligible to the people, through that change which is incident to all living languages, is, I believe, not well known.

Having

Having already obſerved, that the genius of the Hindoos is rather imitative than inventive, I need ſcarcely add, that they have leſs curioſity in their nature than the European nations have; that they do not vary their faſhions; and that they are not fond of novelty beyond the precincts of their Harams. From the temper and tenets of this people, as well as from ſeveral hints in ancient hiſtorians, it appears more than probable, that the ſame kind of garments, of food, of furniture, of buildings, and of manners, which obtained among their progenitors thouſands of years ago, actually prevails among the Hindoo tribes at this day. In like manner, the ſame profeſſions are adhered to by the ſame families with ſuperſtitious exactneſs. Thoſe profeſſions are exceedingly numerous. This diviſion and ſubdiviſion of employment and labour; the vaſt variety of caſtes from the Brahmins down to the fiſherman†, is one proof, among many others, of the antiquity of the Hindoo nation, and their progreſs in the arts. It appears very ſingular, that the different caſtes are not only prohibited from intermarrying, but alſo from eating of the ſame kind of food.

Although the Gentoo laws, relative to Caſtes, their education, food, dreſs, marriages, and occupations, be held forth as religious tenets, yet, upon inveſtigation, they will be found to have been very wiſe and ſalutary political inſtitutions, intended to give authority to government; to ſecure the ſupreme power in the hands of the

† The profeſſion of a fiſherman was, of all profeſſions, the humbleſt among the Jews. The Son of God exemplified his divine power in making fiſhermen inſtruments of propagating the Goſpel.

prieſthood;

prieſthood; to preſerve to the community different races of labourers, artificers, huſbandmen, warriors, and prieſts. The females are betrothed when in a ſtate of infancy, and marriages are conſummated as ſoon as the parties arrive at the age of puberty: an inſtitution which is neceſſary to the population of the country; which, but for this precaution, would be greatly diminiſhed by the operation of the Gentoo religion, which admits not of converts from other religions, and eaſily rejects offenſive characters from the number of its own profeſſors, which is called the Loſs of Caſte.

The Gentoos are perſuaded, that the waters of the three great rivers, Ganges, Kiſtna, and Indus, have the ſacred virtue of purifying thoſe who bathe in them, from all pollutions and ſins. This religious idea ſeems alſo to be founded on a principle of policy, and intended to reſtrain the natives from migrating into diſtant countries: for it is remarkable, that the ſacred rivers I have juſt now mentioned, are ſo ſituated, that there is not any part of India where the inhabitants may not have an opportunity of waſhing away their ins. The Ganges, which riſes in the mountains of Thibet, with its different branches, runs through the kingdoms of Bengal, Bahar, and Orixa, and the upper provinces of Oude, Rohilcund, Agra, Delhi, and Lahore. The Kiſtna divides the Carnatic from Golconda, and runs through the Viſiapore into the interior parts of the Deccan. And the Indus bounding the Guzurat provinces, ſeparates Hindoſtan from the dominions of Perſia.

The

The food of the Hindoos is ſimple, conſiſting chiefly of rice, ghee, which is a kind of imperfect butter, milk, vegetables, and oriental ſpices of different kinds, but chiefly what is called in the eaſt, chilly, and in the weſt, green or Cayen pepper. The warrior caſte may eat of the fleſh of goats, mutton, and poultry, which is dreſſed into carryes and pilaws†. Other ſuperior caſtes may eat poultry and fiſh; but the inferior caſtes are prohibited from eating fleſh or fiſh of any kind. Their greateſt luxury conſiſts in the uſe of the richeſt ſpiceries and perfumes, of which the great people are very laviſh. Their dreſs, in point of richneſs, is proportioned to their ſtations: their pomp and equipage conſiſt in a numerous retinue of ſervants of various denominations, who attend all their viſits and excurſions; in the dreſſes of thoſe attendants; the elegance of their palanquins; and the capariſons of their horſes, camels, and elephants. It is ſuperfluous to obſerve, that in conſequence of this multiplicity of different ranks, the Hindoos have the higheſt ideas of ſubordination, and pay to their ſuperiors the ſame ready deference and homage, which they expect themſelves from their inferiors.

Their houſes cover much ground, and have ſpacious galleries and accommodations of various

† Carryes are a kind of fricaſſees of mutton, fowl, or fiſh; the ſauce of which is compoſed of dried vegetables, peculiar to the eaſt, and fine rice, boiled with very little water, introduced on a ſeparate plate: The ſauce of the fricaſſee is poured on the rice, and the meat laid above both. The Pilaw is fine Patna rice, dry-boiled, and fried with ghee, which has been already deſcribed, mixed with various ſpices, and particularly the cardamon, brought in on a large diſh, in which is concealed amidſt the rice, a boiled fowl, or part of a kid, or of a lamb.

kinds.

kinds. The apartments are ſmall, and the furniture not very elegant, if we except the richeſt Perſian carpets. The grandeur of their palaces conſiſts in baths, perfumes, temples, gods; and harams. The harams or zenans, that is, the reſidences of the women, are removed from the front of the houſe, and lighted only from a ſquare ſpace in the centre of the whole building. The apparel of the women is inconceivably rich; they have jewels on their fingers and about their necks, and alſo in their ears and noſtrils, with bracelets not only on their wriſts, but on their arms above their elbows, and on their legs around their ankles.

One particular claſs of women are allowed to be openly proſtituted; thoſe are the famous dancing girls. Their attitudes and movements are very eaſy, and not ungraceful. Their perſons are delicately formed, gaudily decorated, and highly perfumed. By the continuation of wanton attitudes, they acquire, as they grow warm in the dance, a frantic laſciviouſneſs themſelves, and communicate, by a natural contagion, the moſt voluptuous deſires to the beholders.

Their civil inſtitutions reſpecting the diviſion and ſecurity of property, and the internal police of the country, were originally founded on principles of the ſoundeſt political wiſdom, and were well calculated to promote the happineſs of the whole nation, as well as that of particular caſtes or tribes. But the innovations of conquerors and uſurpers, in ſeveral inſtances, particularly in the tenure of immoveable property, which was originally of a feudal nature, have marred the harmony

mony of the ancient conſtitution, and rendered property and perſonal liberty more precarious, leſs defined, and more expoſed to chicanery and miſconſtruction.

Although the Hindoos are naturally the moſt inoffenſive of all mortals, yet does their humanity conſiſt more in abſtaining from injurious, than in the performance of beneficent actions. There is a wonderful mildneſs in their manners, and alſo in their laws, which are influenced by their manners; by which the murder of an human creature, and of a cow, are the only crimes that are puniſhed by death. Yet with all this gentleneſs of diſpoſition, they are inferior to the boiſterous Europeans, with all their vices, in the virtues of compaſſion and generoſity. They are wanting in that tenderneſs which is the moſt amiable part of our nature. They are leſs affected by the diſtreſſes and dangers, and even the accidental deaths of one another, than any nation I know in the old or new world. Yet they love to exceſs: a proof, either of the inconſtancy of the human character; or that the amorous paſſion is not derived from the nobleſt part of our nature.

This inſenſibility of the Hindoos to the diſtreſſes and dangers of their fellow-creatures, appears to me a wonderful phœnomenon. Perhaps that deſpotiſm which has long been exerciſed under the Mogul tyranny, by familiariſing the mind to ſcenes of death, has blunted a ſenſe of its terrors. Perhaps thoſe ideas of predeſtination and irreſiſtible fate, which prevail in Aſia, and in all deſpotic governments, prepares the mind

mind for an acquieſcence in all events. An Engliſh gentleman was ſtanding by a native of Hindoſtan, when an enormous and fierce tiger leaped from a thicket, and carried off a ſcreaming boy, the ſon of one of his neighbours. The Engliſhman expreſſed ſymptoms of the moſt extreme horror, while the Hindoo remained unmoved. "What," ſaid the former, "are you unaffected by ſo dreadful a ſcene?" "The great God," ſaid the other, "would have it ſo."—Whatever may be the cauſe, it is certain, that death is regarded with leſs horror in India than in any other country in the world. The origin and the end of all things, ſay the philoſophers of India of the preſent times, is a vacuum. A ſtate of repoſe is the ſtate of greateſt perfection: and this is the ſtate after which a wiſe man aſpires. It is better, ſay the Hindoos, to ſit than to walk, and to ſleep than to wake; but death is the beſt of all.

According to the Gentoo laws, criminals ſentenced to death are not to be ſtrangled, ſuffocated, or poiſoned, but to be cut off by the ſword; becauſe, without an effuſion of blood, malefactors are ſuppoſed to die with all their ſins about them; but the ſhedding of their blood, it is thought, expiates their crimes. The unjuſt puniſhment of Nundcomar, who was hanged on a gibbet againſt the laws of his country, and even by an ex poſt facto Engliſh law, was aggravated by that circumſtance of horror, that he died without an effuſion of blood.

The Hindoos are well acquainted with the nature of ſimples, and apply them judiciouſly ei-

ther in performing cures which require not amputation, or in effecting death by quick or ſlow poiſons. They have been for ages in the practice of inoculating for the ſmall-pox; on which occaſion, as well as on others, they have recourſe to the favourable mediation of charms, or ſpells.

Although the practice of Hindoo women burning themſelves on the funeral piles of their huſbands, and embracing in the mean time their dead bodies in their arms, be not ſo general now as it has formerly been, yet does it ſtill prevail among ſome of the wives of men of high caſte or condition: and although this effort of frantic love, courage, and ambition, be deemed an aggrandizement of the family and relations of both huſband and wife, but eſpecially of the wife's, yet their friends and relations conſtantly endeavour to diſſuade the women who declare their reſolutions of burning, from carrying them into execution. Even the Brahmins do not encourage this practice.

The cauſes which inſpire Hindoo women with this deſperate reſolution, are, I imagine, the following:

In the firſt place; as the wife has, from her earlieſt infancy, been betrothed in marriage to her huſband, and from that time has never been permitted to ſee another man; as ſhe is inſtructed to believe that he is perfectly accompliſhed, and taught to reſpect and honour him; as, after conſummation, ſhe is ſhut up from the company, converſation, and even the ſight of other men, with ſtill greater care, if poſſible, than before, being now debarred from ſeeing even the father

or elder brother of her huſband, the bonds of her affection muſt needs be inconceivably ſtrong and indiſſoluble. To an European lady the zenana naturally appears in the light of an horrible priſon: but the daughters of Aſia never conſider confinement to the zenana as any hardſhip. They conſider it as a condition of their exiſtence, and they enjoy all the happineſs of which they have any conception; their whole deſires being concentered and fixed on their huſband, their food, jewels, and female attendants.

In the ſecond place, if the wife ſurvive her huſband, ſhe cannot marry again, and is treated as an inferior perſon, and an outcaſt from her family. Nay, ſhe is obliged, in her mournful and hopeleſs widowhood, to perform all the offices of a menial ſervant.

In the third place, ſhe is flattered with the idea of having immortalized her name, and aggrandized her children, and her own and huſband's families.

Laſtly, ſhe is rendered inſenſible to the pains and horrors of what ſhe is to ſuffer, by thoſe intoxicating perfumes and mixtures which are adminiſtered to her after ſhe has declared her final and unalterable reſolution—I ſay her final reſolution, becauſe one or two declarations, of an intention to die with her huſband, is not ſufficient.

The ſtrength of her reſolution undergoes a probation. There is a certain time preſcribed by the Gentoo law, during which her family and friends exert their utmoſt influence, in order to diſſuade her from burning; and if ſhe perſiſt in her reſolution to the end of that period, it is not

lawful to uſe any more perſuaſions with her, to abandon it. If ſhe ſhould alter her purpoſe after that period, ſhe would be puniſhed with the loſs of all caſtes, and live in a ſtate of the moſt complete miſery and contempt. Nay, if an European or Chriſtian does but touch her very garment with his finger, when ſhe is going to the pile, an immediate ſtop is put to the ceremony, ſhe is forced to live an outcaſt from her family, and from the Gentoo religion.

You will doubtleſs, my friend, have curioſity to know, in what manner, after all their ſtimulatives to perſeverance, the tender ſex, among a ſoft and effeminate people, ſuſtains the near approach of a ſcene ſo full of awe and horror. Amidſt her weeping relations and friends, the voluntary victim to love and honor alone appears ſerene and undaunted. A gentle ſmile is diffuſed over her countenance: ſhe walks upright, with an eaſy but firm ſtep; talks to thoſe around her, of the virtues of the deceaſed, and of the joy with which ſhe will be tranſported when her ſhade ſhall meet with his; and encourages her ſorrowful attendants to bear with fortitude the ſight of thoſe momentary ſufferings which ſhe herſelf is going to feel.—Having aſcended the funeral pile, ſhe lays herſelf down by the body of her huſband, which ſhe fervently embraces. A doſe of narcotic mixtures is then adminiſtered for the laſt time; and inſtantly the perſon, whoſe office it is, ſets fire to the pile.

Thus the moſt determined reſolution of which we can form any conception, is found in the weaker ſex, and in the ſoft climes of Aſia. It

is

is to the honour of that ſex and thoſe climes, that the greateſt courage they exhibit, is the effect, not of the furious impulſes of rage and revenge, but conſcious dignity and love.

It might naturally be imagined by an European, that the ſeveral wives of one man (for polygamy is general throughout all Aſia) would regard one another with mutual jealouſy and averſion; and that they in reality do, has been aſſerted by writers of high reputation. The fact however is quite otherwiſe: they viſit one another with great friendſhip and cordiality; and if they are of the ſame caſte, will occaſionally eat together.—The huſband is reſtrained from eating with his wives, either by a regard to cuſtom; or, as I have been informed by ſome of the Gentoos themſelves, by a precept of their religion.

Notwithſtanding the extreme antiquity of moſt Indian nations, I am told that in India beyond the Ganges, on the confines of Aracan and Pegu, there is a people (if ſolitary ſavages roaming through woods in queſt of prey, deſerve the name of people) that appear to be in the very firſt ſtage of ſociety. They are the only people in the known world that go abſolutely naked, without the ſmalleſt covering on any part of their bodies. They live on fruit, which grows ſpontaneouſly, in the uncultivated deſerts they inhabit, in great abundance; and on the fleſh of animals, which they tear alive and devour. They ſit on their hams, with their legs and arms diſpoſed in the manner of monkeys. At the approach of men, they fly into their woods. They take

take care of their offspring, and live in families, but ſeem to have no ideas of ſubordination of rank or civil government. I have never had occaſion to ſee this race of mortals myſelf, but I have converſed with ſeveral perſons who have ſeen them; all of whom concur in the general account of them, which I have now given you.

I am, &c. &c.

LETTER XXXII.

To J—— M——, Eſq; London.

Calcutta, 5th *October*, 1779.

MY DEAR SIR,

I HAVE at laſt determined to return to Europe as ſpeedily as poſſible. I have obtained leave to go paſſenger in the Swallow packet, which has been under ſailing orders ever ſince the month of July. I could not think of letting ſlip an opportunity of ſeeing Suez and Grand Cairo. It is probable that I may be the bearer of the Company's firſt diſpatches. This letter and its duplicate go by Dutch ſhips to Holland.

In two letters dated at this place, one of them the 20th, the other the 28th of September, I have endeavoured to impreſs your mind with an idea of the immenſe advantages to be derived to Great Britain, by a wiſe and generous ſyſtem of policy, from the ingenious natives and fertile ſoil of Hindoſtan.

But

But in oppoſition to the flattering ideas thrown out in thoſe letters, it may not improbably be urged, that the Company's India inveſtments ſell in Europe at a conſiderable loſs, and conſequently that unwrought commodities, as well as the cotton and ſilk manufactures of India, are obtained at ſo great an expence as to render a trade to advantage impracticable. Such reaſoning will appear plauſible to perſons unacquainted with India; nevertheleſs it is not juſt. How does it happen, that the French, who of late years have not carried on any trade with India but through the Engliſh, as the vehicle of remittances, have ſold the unwrought and manufactured commodities of Bengal, and the coaſt of Coromandel, at public outcry in l'Orient, at the rate of 25 to 40 per cent. profit to the importer, although thoſe commodities are charged with an heavy freight, king's duty, farmer's duty, indult, inſurance, commiſſions, and various other ſmart expences, amounting in the whole from 26 to 31 per cent?—How does it happen, that India goods imported by Daniſh and Portugueſe free-traders, have yielded high profits, notwithſtanding that they are ſubject to higher duties than the companies of their reſpective nations, and other heavy charges, ariſing from the want of home conſumption and exportation to foreign markets?—The eſtabliſhed companies of Denmark and Portugal, as well as Holland, gain by their ſales, when loaded only with the charges incident to the goods themſelves: but the two former of theſe, having no territorial revenues, their

their profits are reduced by the neceſſary expences of civil and military eſtabliſhments.

There are reaſons for imagining, that the Engliſh Company at home are leſs active than they might be in procuring for their goods adequate prices. But the capital error originated in Hindoſtan, where it ſtill remains uncorrected. The Directors, miſled by wrong information from India, and forgetting thoſe ſentiments which on former occaſions they inculcated with a ſtrength of argument worthy of the juſtice of that cauſe in which it was exerted, have adopted maxims the moſt ſubverſive that can be imagined of their intereſts; maxims which have encouraged the rapacity of their faithleſs principal ſervants in India, to concert means of reducing the value, and at the ſame time of enhancing the coſt of the ſeveral articles which compoſe the general inveſtments. Monopolies of manufactured goods, opium, beetle nut, tobacco, ſalt, and rice, (articles which had long employed the induſtry and ingenuity of the people) gave birth to various ſhameful oppreſſions and unreaſonable exactions; which enriched indeed a few highly-favoured and pampered individuals, but which threw multitudes of huſbandmen, labourers, and manufacturers, idle; raiſed the prices of the neceſſaries of life, and greatly depopulated the country. The number of labourers and manufacturers being reduced, and the demand for goods ſtill continuing the ſame, the quality of the commodities was neceſſarily debaſed for the ſake of expedition; while the advanced prices of proviſions, and other neceſſaries,

advanced

advanced of courſe the price of labour. In this manner was the firſt ſhock given to the Company's remittances, and to the population, and conſequently the cultivation of their poſſeſſions. Another evil prevailed in the avarice of the ſubordinate European Chiefs, who profited of the influence of their ſtations, to engroſs agencies, and raw as well as manufactured goods, upon their own terms. Thus it became their intereſt ſtill more and more to debaſe the quality of the goods they purchaſed: for while the manufacturer received a price diminiſhed in proportion to the reduced quality of his commodity, the market price was ſtill kept up to its old ſtandard. The whole loſs fell in this manner upon the Company and the induſtrious private trader; and it fell the more heavily on the Company, that it was accompanied with an accumulated load of extra charges.—But it was reſerved for the board of trade, eſtabliſhed in the year 1774, to compleat this iniquitous ſyſtem, by contracting, from motives of partiality, perhaps of intereſt, for the ſeveral articles which compoſe the Company's inveſtments, on ſuch conditions as have increaſed prices from 25 to 40 per cent. and, in proportion to the advanced price of goods, debaſed their quality.

Theſe allegations may be ſupported by a variety of facts and circumſtances, which form a chain of evidence not to be fabricated by ſubornation, and which therefore cannot poſſibly be rejected. For it is notorious, that foreigners and private merchants have of late years been able to purchaſe many kinds of goods, of the ſame quality

lity with thoſe which form the Company's inveſtments, from 30 to 50 per cent. cheaper than they appear on the Company's invoices; that the members of the board of trade, with only 1500 l. and the preſident with only 2000 l. a year, reſtrained as they are from all perquiſites and emoluments, have yet amaſſed amazing fortunes, although it is a fact of public notoriety, that very few of them were in opulent circumſtances when the board was inſtituted; and that contractors under the board of trade, have been enabled, in as ſhort a time, to retire with independent fortunes, after transferring their contracts to natives; who have alſo with wonderful rapidity, become great and opulent. There is not a ſpeedier way to wealth in India, than the enjoyment of thoſe contracts: for beſides that the terms on which they are made, are always egregiouſly in favour of the contractor, they afford opportunities of a thouſand extortions and exactions.

From the eſtabliſhment of this immaculate board of trade, in October 1774, to the time when the inveſtment ſhall be completed for 1781, it may be computed, with a great degree of certainty, that the whole inveſtments (including the late loſs by fire in Calcutta) have amounted to 746 lacks, 8297 current rupees; on which the Company have been defrauded by the encreaſed price and debaſed quality of goods, at leaſt $33\frac{1}{3}$ per cent. Thus the Company's trade has in that period ſuſtained a loſs of 24,863,432 current rupees; which, at two ſhillings each rupee, is equal to 2,468,943 l. Engliſh.

From

From the foregoing obſervations it appears, that the actual loſſes upon the ſales in Britain, have been occaſioned, not by glutting or overſtocking the market of Europe, but ſolely by the advanced price and debaſed quality of Indian goods. Theſe circumſtances have, moreover, encreaſed the charges at leaſt twelve and a half per cent. above what they would have been on the ſame quantity of goods, had they been ſuch as they were formerly: ſo that the loſs which the Eaſt India Company have ſuſtained in the ſpace of ſeven years, by the infidelity and rapacity of their ſervants, may, on a moderate computation, be eſtimated at three millions ſterling.

The Britiſh legiſlature and Eaſt India Company were undoubtedly ignorant of the infamous practices and wiles of India, when they eſtabliſhed the board of trade; for if they had known theſe, they would aſſuredly have reſtrained its powers within ſtricter limits. However, the inſtructions of the Directors to the Governor General and Council, which accompanied the general commiſſion, have, by the 17th, 18th, 19th, and 20th articles, fully authorized the Supreme Board to compel the inferior to do their duty.—But there was probably a connivance between the old members of both boards, formerly colleagues, ariſing from mutual ſympathy. An attempt to compel the dutiful attention of the inferior board, would have led to fatal diſcoveries, and alſo have thwarted the projected meaſures of rapacious ambition; a furor which, in the meridian of Hindoſtan, rages more than the bile and the

the liver †. To ſo glaring a pitch has the board of trade carried its audacity, that a very high member thereof had the aſſurance to threaten a diſtinguiſhed officer of the board with diſmiſſion from his place, if he ſhould continue to pay frequent complimentary viſits to a member of the other board, whoſe integrity was believed to be incorruptible. Doubtleſs this civil check muſt have proceeded from a conſciouſneſs of guilt, and a dread of the probity of both the officer and the Supreme Counſellor.

From what has been advanced in the letters to which I have already referred you, and from the undeniable facts that have been mentioned in this, I hope, my friend, that you will not heſitate to conclude with me, that the Britiſh acquiſitions in India, under a wiſe adminiſtration, are capable of yielding a far greater revenue, and a much richer exportation, than they have ever in fact yielded hitherto; and that the intereſts of the Eaſt India Company and the Engliſh nation have been ſacrificed to infidelity, rapacity, and oppreſſion.

I am, &c.

† The Engliſh in Hindoſtan are univerſally ſubject to the bile, which almoſt always terminates in the liver, and becomes dangerous. This diſorder they denominate the liver.

LETTER

LETTER XXXIII.

To J——— M———, Eſq. London.

Calcutta, October 8, 1779.

TO reſtore to Hindoſtan Peace, with her attendant, Arts, ought to be the firſt object of the Engliſh Eaſt-India Company; and indeed, in the preſent ſituation of public affairs, of the Engliſh nation, a policy at once ſo wiſe and generous, would meet with the nobleſt rewards. How great the ſatisfaction, of making whole nations happy in the enjoyment of family, property, perſonal ſecurity, religion, eaſe, and affluence! How rich the tribute which the induſtry, gratitude, and fidelity of an ingenious and affectionate people would return, as a compenſation for ſuch bleſſings, to the liberal authors of their felicity! For this noble purpoſe it is neceſſary, in the firſt place, to erect the ſtandard of liberty and juſtice. This being once immovably fixed, an high degree of improvement in agriculture, manufactures, and commerce, with all their beneficial conſequences, will follow of courſe. Yet this improvement may be rendered more rapid, as well as extenſive, by the liberality and wiſdom of the protecting ſtate, which will ſhare ſo largely in its advantages.

I have in a former letter expreſſed an opinion, in which I have more and more confirmed, that nothing could be more conducive to the promotion of induſtry of every kind in this peninſula, than the eſtabliſhment of a general bank, treaſu-

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ry, and mint, upon a new and extenſive ſcale, and on liberal principles. In a remote ſubordinate country, where commerce is naturally fettered by an excluſive right of trade, veſted in a particular ſociety, both country and commerce naturally decay. If a dependent country exports all, and imports little, without converting the difference into an accumulated debt, in reſerve, or as a fund appropriated to the defrayment of the expences of protection againſt foreign enemies, and the adminiſtration of juſtice; the commerce of that country is upheld only by the precious metals circulating, in exchange for labour, under the ſtamp of authority.

If theſe metal coins are intrinſically worth as much as will bear a premium of inſurance, commiſſion, freight, duty, intereſt of extra-advance, with other petty charges; and after all, leave eighty per cent. to the exporter, they will find a paſſage out of the declining country; as individuals, diſregarding the loſs of twenty per cent. will eagerly embrace the only expedient they have of remitting their acquiſitions to their own or any other country. This forced commerce, ſo deſtructive in its tendency, cannot long exiſt; and in its fall, it will probably involve the ruin of that ſtately fabric, which the good fortune of the Company, and the integrity and valour of their former ſervants have erected in India.

In a country thus circumſtanced, the ſpring of life can flow only in the circulation of the remaining ſpecie, by the expences incident to the civil and military eſtabliſhments of the ſovereign monopoliſts. Whatever is exported in country produce

produce or manufactures, to the remote proprietors, more than is imported from them, and that exceeds the actual redundancy (which may be denominated the clear revenue of the lord paramount) of the country, tends to exhauſt the conſtitution by ſlow but certain ſtages; its exiſtence can only be prolonged by protection, and a wiſe ſyſtem of government.

The monies, jewels, and manufactures, exported merely as remittances by individuals, whether publicly or ſecretly, increaſe the diſorder; becauſe from them neither return nor protection are ever expected. But, when individuals have exported ſuch a quantity of the circulating ſpecie in gold and ſilver coins, as gave action and vigour to agriculture and manufactures, the political body, deprived of the power of inſpiration and reſpiration, ſinks down an inanimated corpſe.

An inſtance of ſuch a country as I have in this reaſoning ſuppoſed, we have in the peninſula of Hindoſtan; that part of it, I mean, which is under the actual, not the virtual, dominion of the Engliſh Eaſt India Company. The natives did not originally employ their ingenuity and labour, from the impulſe of any natural appetite, or artificial want; but the rapacity of domineering ſtrangers forced them to purchaſe ſelf-preſervation by gold, which was to be obtained only in exchange for manufactures. Hence they meaſured the price of their labour only by gold. Where this is not to be had, to what purpoſe ſubmit to any toil? The precious metals ought never therefore to be drained from India; for there,

above

above all countries in the world, they are neceſſary to the encouragement of induſtry and art; and they who trade in the way of barter, and import gold and ſilver coins for neceſſary uſe, are the beſt friends to their country, provided that the balance of trade in their favour be ultimately liquidated in bullion.

Let the Engliſh Eaſt India Company's groſs revenue be eſtimated at three millions a year: ſuppoſe one half that ſum neceſſarily remains in circulation, to defray the civil and military charges of government; that the other half is remitted home in the Bengal inveſtment, and in money to purchaſe the inveſtments from China, Bombay, and Bencoolen, more than the receipt of imports from Europe, and the bills drawn on the Directors; and that out of the million and an half remaining in circulation, one third part is annually remitted home by the Company's ſervants, as their private acquiſitions in unperiſhable commodities, that is, gold, ſilver, and precious ſtones: it will follow, that two millions are exported annually, for which no equivalent is returned; and of that ſum, one quarter part of unperiſhable commodities, whoſe ſource is not inexhauſtible; the circulation and influence of which gave life to manufactures, to trade, to agriculture, and induſtry of every kind. The conſumption of periſhable commodities, exported in fair trade, is an obvious advantage to a manufacturing country, as it ſecures an annual and perpetual demand. But the exportation of goods which are unperiſhable, and bear a fixed value, even in exchange for periſhable goods, tends to ſhut up the avenues

nues of circulation, if the unperiſhable goods are not alſo the genuine production of the country, and that the fountain is not exhauſtible.

I ſhall in my next, endeavour to prove, that the bullion and coins at preſent in circulation in the European dominions of Hindoſtan, are now reduced within ſo contracted a compaſs, as to threaten the moſt ruinous conſequences, if ſome meaſures be not ſpeedily taken to avert the impending danger.

I am, &c.

LETTER XXXIV.

To J—— M——, Eſq;

Calcutta, October 12, 1779.

ANY enquiry into the quantity of coins in circulation in Bengal, will prove fruitleſs. With regard to this matter, the moſt intelligent cannot form even a conjecture. The numerous mints, the various values ſet upon coins, independently of their intrinſic worth, together with the arts of Shroffs, Banians, and Circars†, will render any inveſtigation of it that may be ſet on foot by authority, difficult in its progreſs, and in its iſſue uncertain.

Many perſons imagine that there is in Bengal ſtill a vaſt quantity of ſpecie; and they found this

† Banians are native brokers; Shroffs are money-changers and bankers; and Circars are clerks or writers.

opinion upon the apparent ſufficiency of the circulation in that country, without conſidering that the decay of money manifeſts itſelf moſt ſtrongly, by a rapid decline of trade, which renders a leſs quantity of ſpecie adequate to the general demand. Commerce is a ſpontaneous plant, of a nature too delicate to bear conſtraint, and that cannot exiſt without the nouriſhing influence of freedom: which again can have no being, in matters of commerce, without a copious circulation of ſome ſign of value ſtamped by public authority.

The idea of an abundant quantity of money ſtill circulating in Bengal, is chiefly founded on a calculation of ſums exported from Europe ſince the firſt diſcovery of the mines of Mexico and Peru. But notwithſtanding this exportation of coins from Europe, and that new conqueſts to the northward, particularly the Rohilla country in 1773, have poured into the territories of the Engliſh Eaſt India Company freſh ſupplies, the draught from this channel has been more plentiful than the ſources whence it has been ſupplied.

The country of the Rohillas, ſubdued by the arms of the Company, was expoſed at once to the avarice and oppreſſion of the Engliſh, and to the rapacity, tyranny, and brutality of Sujah-ul-Dowla. The wealth and treaſures of this country were ſeized by the conquerors, and the inoffenſive inhabitants forced to abandon their native ſoil, and to ſeek an aſylum in the boſoms of other enemies, leſs impolitic and barbarous than thoſe from whom they fled. The plunder of the

Engliſh,

Engliſh, or of perſons acting under their auſpices, was computed to be a million ſterling, and that of Sujah-ul-Dowla certainly amounted to a greater ſum. Thus, upwards of two millions ſterling flowed from the Rohilla country into the kingdom of Bengal, and was eaſily ſwallowed up in the vacant gulph.

It is certain that ſums ſurpaſſing the Rohilla plunder, have ſince been annually ſent out of the Bengal provinces, in all probability never to return again. Monies ſent to China, Madras, Bombay, Bencoolen, the Mahratta territories, Java, Caſſimire, and other inland places, are leſs likely to return, than what are ſent to Europe. Nadir-Scha carried away from Delhi in 1738, in ſpecie, maſſive ornaments, plate, ingots, &c. to the value of about 40 millions ſterling: a ſum greater than half the bullion which before that period had been imported by Europeans into Hindoſtan, ſince the earlieſt diſcovery of the mines of America. Coſſim-Ali-Cawn carried away in 1764, a treaſure in ſpecie perhaps equal to a quarter, or even a third part of the whole coin at that time in circulation in Bengal and Bahar. The deficiency in the uſual imports of bullion, and by exportation of ſilver, in the ten years from 1757 to 1766, was more than eight millions. Since that year, at a moderate computation, the Company and private traders under the Britiſh conſtitution in Hindoſtan, cannot have exported to China, in coin and bullion, leſs than ſeven millions. The laſt war with Hyder Ally and the preſent Mahratta war, have carried off above three millions, in the current coins of

Bengal. Bengal has either ignorantly or diſingenuouſly ſubmitted to a balance of trade againſt herſelf with the coaſt of Coromandel, Malabar, and Guzarat, which has been liquidated with money. She has been continually paying a heavy balance in money to the Dutch of Batavia, for ſugar, arrack, and ſpiceries. Her opium has not been ſo well huſbanded as to draw in her favour, as it might have done, a current of trade with other eaſtern countries. And ever ſince the fall of diamonds in Europe†, the quantities of gold and ſilver ſent home as remittances by the Company's ſervants, have been immenſe. During theſe laſt fifteen years there has been very little ſilver, and no gold, imported from Europe; and ſcarcely any gold from the eaſtward; neither has the trade to the gulphs of Perſia and Arabia been ſo conducted and encouraged, as to produce the regular ſupplies of gold and ſilver which it had been accuſtomed to yield. In fact there has been very little gold coined in that period in Bengal.

The quantity of coin muſt originally have been inconceivably great, if theſe continual drains had not reduced it to a narrow compaſs. No computation, founded even on conjecture, can keep pace with ſo vaſt a conſumption.

The dread of tyranny, ſo univerſally exerciſed in Aſia, has indeed probably induced many of the principal natives of Hindoſtan to conceal their treaſure under ground; whence it may be

† Which happened in conſequence of the vaſt diſcoveries of mines in Brazil.

preſumed

preſumed, that their ſucceſſors have of late been digging it, and by that means, that they have furniſhed a temporary ſupply to anſwer the faint calls of an expiring trade: But aſſuredly, that fountain (if it is not merely imaginary) and the fund which it yielded, are both now nearly exhauſted.—Aſiatics generally convert their riches into jewels, of which four-fifths of their treaſures conſiſt. Reaſoning from theſe matters of fact, we may conclude, with a conſiderable degree of probability, that the quantity of coin in circulation before the dominion of the Engliſh became abſolute in Bengal, never could have been ſo very great as many people have been taught to believe.

The flouriſhing ſtate of agriculture and manufactures, the high intereſt of money, and the fixed value of bullion, before the vaſt ſums which have of late years been exported were taken out of circulation, clearly demonſtrate, that the quantity in circulation never exceeded, in any very great degree, that which was requiſite to the current purpoſes of trade: for it has ever been obſerved, in all commercial countries, that when the coin in circulation exceeded the neceſſary demands of trade, their nominal values fell inſenſibly to the market prices of the pure metal contained in them, and oftentimes below it; whence the value of the metals was conſiderably leſſened.

Such is the influence of authority!—The diminution of the value of coins is leſs perceptible in the eſtimation of either imaginary or real coins, than

than in the advanced prices of thoſe commodities for which they are exchanged.—If the diminiſhed quantity of coins has not had that effect in India, it is becauſe the prices of country manufactures, and commodities proper for foreign trade, have baſely and treacherouſly been upheld by pernicious contracts, calculated ſolely to enrich a few individuals, high in ſtation or in favour, at the expence of their employers and the impoveriſhed natives. By theſe contracts, all kinds of goods for exportation, and many for native conſumption, are made to paſs through the unhallowed hands of various rapacious agents, until the firſt coſt of many articles is doubled before it receives the Company's impreſſion in their export warehouſes.—Another cauſe why the want of bullion has not yet been felt in all its deſtructive conſequences, is, that the circulating coins have from neceſſity been made a commercial commodity, by which the acquiſitions of individuals are legally remitted from India. Manufactures being neglected, a leſs quantity of coins is ſufficient to maintain a circulation. The evils dreaded from the diminiſhed quantity of coins would have appeared conſpicuouſly before this time, had not trade, agriculture, and population diminiſhed in a ſtill greater proportion. But, from a continuation of the export of coin, the evil day is faſt approaching, which will involve the Britiſh Eaſt India Company in the ruin of that people, over whom the power of arms and of fortitude hath acquired a dominion, which they have neither wiſdom nor firmneſs to maintain.

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In this alarming ſituation, the danger of which is probably the greater that it is not ſuſpected, a remedy may ſtill be found; more ſimple as well as efficacious in its nature, than thoſe who have imbibed Aſiatic maxims from their predeceſſors, or than deſigning Gomaſtahs† and Banians will be willing to allow.

Let the natives, by eaſy gradations, be reconciled to the idea of ſupporting, by means of divers puniſhments, the authority of ſuch ſalutary laws as are not directly incompatible with the leading principles of their religious caſts, profeſſions, feudal tenures, the ſubordination of ranks, and the ſuperior dignity of thoſe in public authority; which, in all Aſiatic governments muſt neceſſarily be preſerved inviolate. This I believe to be practicable: for I preſume, that in many inſtances the prejudices of cuſtom and education will give way to motives of ſelf-intereſt and perſonal ſecurity. Let markets be eſtabliſhed for the productions of agriculture and art. Fix one certain ſtandard of coins; and ſupply the deficiency of the precious metals by paper currency. The faith and credit of government, pledged for ſo large a portion of the circulating wealth of the country, will operate, as the public ſtocks do in Britain, to ſecure the loyalty and fidelity of the holders againſt all treachery, and all machinations in favour either of foreign or domeſtic foes.

If induſtry receive not any check in bartering either labour or goods for any circulating com-

† Gomaſtahs are a kind of country brokers.

modity

modity of eſtabliſhed value, the redundancy or net revenue of the lord paramount, after affording protection to the natives, may ſafely be exported, without doing any injury to the country from a want of equal returns: becauſe the common courſe of trade, and the natural intereſt of the lord, will ſecure a ſufficient ſupply of precious metals to give efficacious currency to bank notes. Thus the productions of induſtry and ingenuity will find ſo invariable a ſtaple, that every apprehenſion of ſuperfluous produce will ſubſide: an apprehenſion which has ſo often diſcouraged the labours of the manufacturer and huſbandman, and contributed to depopulate the moſt fertile fields in Hindoſtan.

The charges of collecting make now an enormous defalcation of the Company's revenues†, diſtreſs the zemindar or renter, and oppreſs the ryot or ſub-tenant, who are equally defrauded in the exchange of money; but the latter is ultimately loaded with the burthen of the difference of exchange, as well as with all the gifts and bribes which the zemindars are forced to give to chiefs, collectors, and their numberleſs train of harpies, under the denomination of dependents and ſervants.

By means of ſtamping a fixed general value upon coins, and of notes bearing effectual value, theſe deſtructive evils will ceaſe; and the co lec-

† In 1772, by a computation, it was ſhewn that the Company's proportion of the collected revenue was, as ſeventeen one-half to twenty two one-half. The remaining five in twenty two one-half, or twenty two two-thirds per cent were ſwallowed up in the charges of collection. The net revenue eſtimated at three one-half millions, makes the groſs revenue equal to four one-half millions, conſequently one million is thus waſted in unneceſſary charges.

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tors, zemindars, and traders, will be enabled to remit their rents, taxes, and properties to the metropolis, and from place to place, without the expence, riſque, and oppreſſion incident to the preſent mode of tranſportation, and the unconſcionable, uſurious exactions upon the bills of Shroffs †.

The opening of channels for private remittances to Europe, would be attended with many advantages to the Company and the Britiſh nation, and with ſtill more to India. Many ſuch channels might be opened, without tranſgreſſing that line which is drawn between the excluſive commerce of the Company and private trade. For inſtance; as the Company's trade and poſſeſſions in India naturally tend to extend the ſale of their principal commodities in Europe, it is reaſonable to ſuppoſe that they may increaſe their homeward inveſtments: which would enable them to introduce a legal and ſecure mode of furniſhing their European ſervants in India with remittances, to a very conſiderable amount, by annual bills; whence ſolid benefits would accrue to themſelves, as well in the exchange as in the circulation of their bank-paper.

One great principle ſhould be invariably obſerved, that a greater quantity of coins or paper-money be not thruſt into circulation than the progreſs of agriculture, manufactures, commerce, and population, neceſſarily require, in

† The neceſſary depoſit of coin in the bank, will, upon any emergency of invaſion, or inteſtine commotion, ſerve the moſt uſeful purpoſes, and, together with the quantity of paper in circulation, will tend to ſecure attachment and fidelity in the people, from motives of ſelf-intereſt.

order

order to give freedom and eaſe to the exchange thereof from hand to hand. At the ſame time it muſt be allowed, that a ſuperfluity of coins, or other currency, is not ſo pernicious as a deficiency thereof; ſince the natural influence and credit of every wiſe government, will always be able to ſupport the circulation both of coin and paper to a certain reaſonable extent; in as much as in the common courſe of trade the ſuperfluous quantity of coin will gradually diſappear, until the remaining quantity be reduced to a juſt level. I might add, in confirmation of this reaſoning, that there are always certain timid and avaricious people, who hoard up coins, through want of confidence and ſpirit to apply them to the purpoſes for which coinage was invented.—From this general plan, of fixing the value of coins and eſtabliſhing a bank, maturely digeſted, improved, and carried into execution, an annual revenue would ariſe, exceeding half a million ſterling.

Perſons who have reſided long in India, will very probably aſſert, that it will be impoſſible to introduce any practice into that country which interferes with eſtabliſhed cuſtom, and which gives employment to ſo wealthy a caſt as that of the Circars, of whom moſt of the Banians and Shroffs are a part. Gentlemen who entertain this opinion, do not ſufficiently reflect on the nature of the human mind; which is of a very pliant and verſatile nature, and which, through the influence of fear, friendſhip, or neceſſity, is reconciled, without any great difficulty, to all circumſtances and ſituations. Beſides, they do not

not conſider, that the preſent mode of negociating the exchange and currency of coins, is not ſo antient as to have become the conſtant and invariable cuſtom of the country. The greateſt bankers and negociators of money in the eaſtern world, the Seets of Muxadabad, from a low ſtate and origin, became the founders of the preſent pernicious ſyſtem, the commencement of which cannot be traced farther back than the year 1720. And farther; it is well known that either the king, or any of his nabobs, merely by a mandate under his ſeal, could alter the repreſentations upon the coins, or reduce their real or nominal values.—When the ſimple exertions of power, without ſecuring the current value of the coins, could ſo effectually carry its purpoſes, what may not be expected from an equal degree of power, guided in all its operations by a ſteady regard to juſtice? Add to this conſideration, that probably two thirds of the whole circulation would once in every year paſs through the Company's treaſury, in the receipt of the territorial revenues, taxes, and duties, and alſo return into the channel of circulation through their European and other ſervants, whoſe duty and intereſt it would be to ſupport its credit.

I am, &c.

LETTER

LETTER XXXV.

To J—— M——, Eſq; London.

Calcutta, 15 *October*, 1779.

TO reſtore the Emperor of Hindoſtan to his hereditary Imperial throne, would be an act of wiſdom, as well as of juſtice. From a conduct ſo noble, ſo generous, and juſt, the Britiſh nation would derive ſuch a reputation for virtue, and raiſe for themſelves ſuch a monument of glory in Aſia, as no nation hath ever attained, and which in fact are not otherwiſe attainable.

Since the 18th of September 1773, the date of the treaty of Benara, Hindoſtan has been in a ſtate of perfect anarchy, without a conſtitutional head, or any acknowledged ſovereignty in any particular ſtate or perſon upon earth. Indeciſion and uncertainty with regard to this great point of ſovereignty, have been productive of convulſions, which ſtill continue to threaten ſudden deſtruction to the Engliſh Company, and a ſeries of revolutions in Hindoſtan, more intereſting to Europe than thoſe which preceded the aſcendency of the Company's government in that country.

At this time, the ſovereign powers are uſurped by nominal nabobs, repreſenting a king of Delhi as Emperor of Hindoſtan; their authority being originally derived from the Emperor, but ſtill limited and revocable. The Engliſh Company, as treaſurers of the empire, collect the imperial revenues of Bengal, Bahar, and Oriſſa, under

under the Emperor's ſpecial grant and authority, in conſideration of their fidelity, loyalty, attachment, and ſervices; and particularly, upon condition of their being perpetual guarantees for the payment of twenty-ſix lacks of Sicca rupees, being three hundred and twenty five thouſand pounds ſterling, as an annual tribute from the nabobſhip of Bengal, and for the free and perpetual poſſeſſion of the provinces of Illiahabad and Corah, ſolemnly ceded and guaranteed to the king, as a royal demeſne, for the ſupport of his imperial dignity.—Such were the conditions on which the nabobs and the Engliſh Company received their authority and privileges from the court of Delhi.

But now the nabobs refuſe allegiance, and the Company have not only with-held the ſtipulated tribute, but have ſold the provinces of Illiahabad and Corah to the nabob of Oude, Sujah-ul-Dowla, a tributary and immediate ſervant of the empire; who had alſo ſolemnly joined in the former ceſſions and guaranty to the king of Delhi.

Although the ſovereignty of the emperor be denied, and his rights with-held from him with equal impolicy and injuſtice, his name was nevertheleſs held forth by the Company, as a pretext for demanding from other European ſtates, as well as from natives and Britiſh ſubjects, quit-rents, duties, and impoſts. All monies are coined in his name; civil and criminal courts are held in his name; and in his name, juſtice continues to be adminiſtered and executed. Yet the Engliſh Company make war and peace, and

ſupport

ſupport a military eſtabliſhment, and alſo a court of ſupreme judicature, which iſſues writs and adminiſters juſtice according to the common and ſtatute laws of England, upon ex poſt facto principles, in the name of the king of Great Britain. This court executes, with rigorous ſeverity, its criminal and penal decrees, and extends its juriſdiction as well to the lives, liberty, and property of the natives, who are confeſſedly ſubjects of the empire, and within the imperial territories, as to the migrating ſubjects of Great Britain.

This government, the ſyſtem of which is undefinable, becauſe right, fact, and form, are ſo manifeſtly at variance, cannot in the nature of things, have permanent exiſtence. A ſucceſſion of diſcordant meaſures, ſpringing from various and venal ſources, muſt confound and counteract each other, until the power and influence of a government, at once ſo iniquitous and unſtable, be reduced to ſo low a ſtate, that neceſſity will point to its final ſubverſion, as the only method of reſtoring peace, liberty, and happineſs to the people.

The ſovereignty is beyond a doubt veſted in Shah Allum, king of Delhi.—To deny that fact, and not to ſupport the right of that prince, would be to overthrow all Britiſh claims and pretenſions in every part of Hindoſtan. Wiſdom and ſound policy muſt here overrule the frenzy of avarice and ambition. The reigning prince is the undoubted ſovereign of Hindoſtan, being the great great grandſon of Aurenzebe. who was the tenth (that reigned) in direct lineal deſcent from

from Tamerlane.—The grand queſtion concerning the ſovereignty being decided, another important queſtion may then alſo be decided; whether the ſplendid ſuperſtructure that has been raiſed by the Engliſh Company in India, be founded on a rock or on ſand?

The king of Delhi being acknowledged as the ſovereign of all Hindoſtan, the greateſt body of merchants in the world, by a wiſe improvement of that revolution, would not only prolong its exiſtence, but acquire new and unexampled credit, wealth, and grandeur; and the Britiſh nation ſtrictly allied to the Emperor of Hindoſtan, on principles of juſtice and mutual ſecurity and advantage, would emerge from its preſent diſtreſſes, and be reſtored to its former power and glory.

Such is the diſtracted ſtate of Hindoſtan, and ſo powerful many of the princes who have uſurped the power of the king of Delhi, that that potentate cannot, by his own power and influence, recover his hereditary authority and dominions. But this great object he might attain through the powerful aſſiſtance of Great Britain. And that Britain may be induced to afford this aſſiſtance, let her be rewarded with a participation in that empire, which her juſtice ſhall have reſtored to the natural ſovereign. Let the crown of Great Britain be inveſted with an independent ſovereignty over certain provinces, and let the king of Delhi enjoy, as heretofore, a ſecure, undiſturbed dominion over the reſt. Thus the political maxim, divide et impera, may be applied in a new ſenſe, but with all its eſtabliſhed authority.

rity. A mutual alliance and junction of power would render the ſovereignty of both the Emperor and Britain permanent in India, and make not only their reſpective ſubjects, but tributary princes, happy in the full enjoyment of perſonal ſecurity, and the riches that iſſue from peace, agriculture, and free commerce. How great the happineſs of men who had been dragged from their families to war and rapine, and continual ſubjects of extortion and oppreſſion, when they are enabled to return, without any apprehenſion of ever being again torn from their families! when they are permitted to enter, in perfect peace and ſecurity, upon domeſtic induſtry and to enjoy the full profits of their ingenuity and labour!—Laws that ſecure ſuch ineſtimable bleſſings, muſt needs be objects of their warmeſt gratitude. They will teach their children to admire and adore that wiſe ſyſtem of government, which, although it originated in uſurpation, hath made the arts of peace to riſe from the horrors of war. Succeſſive generations would tranſmit, with their inheritance, ſentiments of gratitude to the Britiſh nation, which will ſecure poſterity againſt a fatal encouragement of external invaſions or inteſtine commotions; and the protecting ſtate, regarded, though remote, as a tender parent, will grow great and opulent by the offerings which a grateful people will chearfully tranſmit as an annual tribute, in commemoration of their happy tranſition from ſavage anarchy and oppreſſion to the enjoyment of property, liberty, and life.

I am, &c.

LETTER

LETTER XXXVI.

To J—— M——, Eſq; London.

Calcutta, Oct. 17, 1779.

THE great founder of the Britiſh power and influence in India, the memorable Lord Clive, procured thoſe vaſt conceſſions from Shah-Allum, the preſent king of Delhi and emperor of Hindoſtan, which have transformed a Company of merchants into ſovereigns of extenſive dominions, with a great military regular eſtabliſhment†. By one general and three particular Firmaunds, bearing date the 12th of October 1765, the emperor conſtituted and granted to the Company, "In conſideration of their attachment and ſervices, as faithful ſervants of the empire, worthy of royal favours, the office of Dewannee of the provinces of Bengal, Bahar, and Oriſſa, upon condition, expreſsly, that they engage to become guarantee and ſecurity to him, for the punctual payment of an annual tribute of twenty-ſix lacks of rupees, iſſuing from the Nabobſhip of Bengal; of keeping up a large army for the protection of the provinces, and of providing for the expences of the Nizamut; with a perpetual grant of the reſidue, upon theſe conditions, to the Company." By one other Firmaund of the ſame date, "and for the ſame conſidera-

† The Company's military eſtabliſhment in Bengal, Madras, Bombay and Bencoolen, excluſive of their marine, may be computed at one hundred thouſand men.

tions," confirming a vague and imperfect Sunnud from the depoſed nabob Coſſimali-Cawn, and his ſucceſſor Meer Jaffier deceaſed, " of the Chuklas of Burdwan, Midnapore, and Chittagong, and the twenty-four Pergunnahs of Calcutta, in perpetuity. By another Firmaund, granting and confirming the reverſion of Lord Clive's jaghire in perpetuity to the Company, " in conſideration of fidelity." By another Firmaund of the ſame date, " in expreſs conſideration of the fidelity and good wiſhes of the Engliſh Company, the emperor grants and confirms the five Northern Circars on the coaſt of Golconda and Coromandel, to them." By a ſolemn treaty, made and concluded the 16th of Auguſt 1765, between Sujah-ul-Dowla, nabob of Oude and vizier of the empire, of one part; Nudjum-ul-Dowla, nabob of Bengal, of one other part; and the Engliſh Eaſt India Company, of the third part; ſealed and approved, as a mark of neceſſary authenticity and form, by his majeſty the king of Delhi; in the fourth article it is expreſsly covenanted and ſtipulated, " That the king Shah Allum ſhall remain in full poſſeſſion of Corah, and ſuch parts of the provinces of Illiahabad as he now poſſeſſes, which are ceded to his majeſty, as a royal demeſne, for the ſupport of his dignity and expences." And by the eleventh article of the ſame treaty, the three contracting powers ſolemnly " engage to obſerve, ſtrictly and ſincerely, all the articles contained and ſettled in the preſent treaty; that they will not ſuffer the ſame to be infringed, directly or indirectly; and that they do and will, generally and

and reciprocally, guarantee all the ſtipulations therein." And laſtly, by a ſolemn agreement made and executed between the king of Delhi and the Company, bearing date the 19th Auguſt 1765, "The Company, in conſideration of his majeſty having been graciouſly pleaſed to grant the Dewannee of Bengal, Bahar, and Oriſſa, do engage themſelves to be ſecurity for the regular and punctual payment of the annual tribute of twenty ſix lacks, in the manner, and at the time ſpecifically mentioned." That great ſtateſman and ſoldier who formed theſe treaties, was guided in this manner as much by a regard to juſtice as by a love of his country; which principles are by no means incompatible, but rather allied to each other, for as much as the public intereſt is beſt conſulted by a fair and equitable conduct, on the part of government, towards all nations and all men. It is only by extending and improving the grand idea that ſeems to have actuated the magnanimous ſoul of Lord Clive, when he treated with the king of Delhi, that the Britiſh eſtabliſhments in the eaſt, can be rendered both advantageous and permanent. Friendſhip and alliance with the Emperor ſhould be made the baſis of all political arrangements in Britiſh Hindoſtan. But no alliance can be firmly eſtabliſhed without reciprocal advantages. To make a treaty with a friendly prince to-day, and to break through the conditions of that treaty to-morrow, is an inſult which tends to convert him into an inveterate enemy.

Such has been the conduct of the Eaſt India Company's ſervants towards the unfortunate

king of Delhi. They have withheld from that prince the ſtipulated tribute, and ſold the province of Illiahabad and Corah to his own prime miniſter Sujah-ul-Dowla. Yet ſtill they continue to officiate as Dewan, or treaſurer, under the grant and appointment of the ſame king, and to appropriate to their own private uſe, not only the ſurplus revenues, but alſo his Majeſty's ſpecial reſervations for the ſupport of his royal dignity and government.

Can theſe acts of flagrant injuſtice be defended or even palliated on principles of policy or expediency? If there lives a man equal to ſo arduous a taſk, it is the preſent governor general of Bengal. But even the inventive genius of Mr. Haſtings, when he attempts to defend the detention of the king's tribute, and the infamous treaty of Benaras †, labours and is at a loſs. The fluency of his diction, the ſubtilty of his reaſoning, the darkneſs of his inſinuations and illuſions, avail nothing in ſo plain a cauſe. All his reaſons for meaſures ſo impolitic and unjuſt, are refuted by preceding, immediate, and ſubſequent aſſertions written with his own hand, and ſtill remaining upon the Company's records. All he alledges in juſtification of his conduct is, 1ſt. That the king ought not, on any pretext, to have removed from the ceded provinces; 2nd. That he had transferred his right in theſe provinces to the Mahrattas; and 3rd. That the allowing twenty-ſix lacks of rupees to go annu-

† The treaty by which the property and poſſeſſion of the king's provinces in the Duab were conveyed to the nabob of Oude, Sujah-ul-Dowla.

ally

ally to Delhi, would prove injurious to the circulation of Bengal.

With reſpect to the firſt of theſe arguments: The treaty made by the king with Lord Clive in 1765, is ſilent as to the place of reſidence, and therefore implies that Delhi or Agra, ſhall naturally continue to be the place of the emperor's abode. Farther, that prince left the ceded provinces with the knowledge and approbation of the Company's governor and council, and was conducted to the frontiers of Corah by their General in Chief, Sir Robert Barker, and Sujah-ul-Dowla, who all of them knew that the king's object was, to recover Delhi from the uſurped power of Zabda Cawn, a Rohilla chief; and that he had repeatedly ſolicited the Company's aſſiſtance for that purpoſe.

As to the ſecond: The transfer of his right in the ceded provinces to the Mahrattas, was not a voluntary deed. That nation extorted a grant of thoſe provinces from him when he was their priſoner. That this grant could not be valid, Mr. Haſtings himſelf allows. In a public letter of the fifteenth January 1773, he writes, "that the ceſſion of Corah and Illiahabad by the king to the Mahrattas, when he was their priſoner, could not be conſidered as valid, having been forcibly wreſted from him." And in another of the firſt of March 1773, he ſays, "In no ſhape can this compulſatory ceſſion from the king releaſe us from the obligation we are under to defend theſe provinces, which we have ſo particularly guaranteed to him, and which his viceroy, Moneer-ul-Dowla, at this time puts under our protection.

protection. Independent of our own conviction, of the propriety of this plan, your orders in the fifth paragraph of the thirtieth of June, 1769, in a ſimilar caſe, leaves us without an option." Nay, he afterwards avowed in council, that in treating with Sujah-ul-Dowla, privately, he had declared, that, " he was conſenting to meaſures againſt the peremptory orders of his ſuperiors."

With regard to the third pretext, the drawing money from Bengal: In the firſt place, the ſum was not ſo great as to injure the circulation of Bengal; a truth of which Mr. Haſtings ſeems to have been fully ſenſible on many occaſions, when, inſtead of lacks he ſent out of that kingdom crores† of rupees. But the truth is, the money would not have been carried to Delhi: it would have been expended in Bengal on arms, cloathing, proviſions, and coarſe metals. Beſides, in the ſtate of affairs at that time, the intercourſes of trade would have brought not only that ſum, but as much more, down from the extremity of the empire, in exchange for the merchandiſe of the Company's provinces. General Sir Robert Barker, who ſeems to have underſtood the whole affair as clearly as he ſeems alſo to have underſtood the true principles of juſtice and ſound policy, oppoſed Mr. Haſtings in council with an honourable firmneſs, and by ſolid reaſoning. Time will prove, to the utter confuſion of the deſpoilers of treaſures, and betrayers of truſt,

† A lack of rupees is one hundred thouſand rupees, or twelve thouſand five hundred pounds; and a crore is one hundred lacks, or one million two hundred and fifty thouſand pounds.

that

that their cobweb pretences will vaniſh like ſmoke before the ſunſhine of right and reaſon.

But what can be ſaid againſt the language of the unfortunate king himſelf, ſo far back as November 1764, after the battle of Buxar?—Influenced by a dread of the perfidy and ambition of Sujah ul Dowla, of which he had had painful experience, he ſays, "If the Engliſh will, contrarily to their intereſts, make peace with the Vizier †, I will go to Delhi; for I cannot think of returning again into the hands of a man who has uſed me ſo ill. The Rohillas are always enemies to the imperious vizier; they are my friends."—Mr. Haſtings being then employed in a high ſtation in Bengal, could not be ignorant either of this remarkable letter, or of the diſtinguiſhed traits of Sujah-ul-Dowla's character; and perhaps, it was upon that knowledge that he truſted to make his own fortune by the moſt eaſy and rapid means. He laid his plan deep, probed before the lancet, and ſucceeded. But he amputated!

Ambitious and warlike princes always endeavour to conceal their uſurpations under a veil of apparent juſtice; becauſe other ſtates, alarmed by acts of flagrant injuſtice, eſpouſe the cauſe of the injured party, in order to curb the dangerous ambition of a powerful neighbour. But this obvious maxim of policy was overlooked by theſe clandeſtine contractors; while the one aimed at the empire of Hindoſtan, over the neck of his maſter and ſovereign lord; and the other openly ſacrificed the honour and dignity of his nation. On

† Sujah-ul-Dowla.

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the whole, it is evident, that unleſs juſtice be done to the king of Delhi, and honourable reparation made for all his wrongs, the Company have forfeited their office of Dewan; that the nabobs of Oude and of Bengal have forfeited their nabobſhips, their eſtates, and lives, as traitors to their lawful ſovereign; and that the king of Delhi has a fair, legal, inconteſtible right to transfer the ſovereignty of theſe dominions, together with the arrears due to him from the Engliſh Company†, to the King of Great Britain, as well as the revenues of Illiahabad and Corah, uſurped and collected by the Nabob of Oude ſince the date of the infamous treaty of Benaras.

I am, &c.

LETTER XXXVII.

To J—— M———, Eſq. London.

Calcutta, October 28, 1779.

A PARTITION of the ſovereignty of Hindoſton. between Great Britain and the Emperor, and a firm alliance between theſe powers, would be attended with the greateſt advantages

† The Company's arrears of tribute, with country intereſt accumulating from the 28th of February 1772 to 28th of February 1781, by annual (not monthly) inſtalments, will amount to 6,850,000 l. ſterling: a ſum which will greatly exceed the value, or coſt, of all their fortifications, cantonments, barracks, and military and ordnance ſtores, &c.

The arrears, or rather the claim upon the Nabob of Oude, would be about double the above amount, but are irrecoverable.

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to both, and alſo with tranquillity to all the native princes of India. That the eſtabliſhment of ſuch a compact and alliance, would be productive of the greateſt bleſſings to all theſe parties, will not, I imagine, admit of much diſpute: but ſome doubts may ariſe concerning its practicability. I ſhall therefore endeavour to ſhew, that it is not impracticable, and alſo how it may be effected.

Such is the diſtreſſed ſituation of the unfortunate monarch of Delhi, that any conditions may be obtained from him; but, that a compact between two ſovereign powers may be permanent, it is neceſſary that it be juſt. Let honour and generoſity therefore appear in the formation of a treaty with the Emperor, and good faith in maintaining it.

By a captivating diſplay of all the virtues, acquire the confidence of the native powers of India. There is not in the world, a race of men more grateful for favours than the Hindoos, or who have quicker feelings of right and wrong. Operate on the generous ſenſibility of their nature. It will not be difficult, by the exerciſe of humanity and juſtice, to make them more ambitious of the friendſhip of Britain, than jealous of its power.

Towards effecting the eſtabliſhment of two independent ſovereignties in Hindoſtan, it will be neceſſary to ſecure the concurrence and co-operation of the Seiks, Jauts, the ſcattered Rohilla tribes, and probably the court of Poonah. The three nations firſt mentioned, will clearly perceive, in the meaſure propoſed, their own intereſt;

eſt; and the Marattas may be induced to agree to it, by rewarding the conceſſions they may be required to make, by ſuch conſiderations as may appear to them of the greateſt importance. It may be ſtipulated, that they ſhall pay no tribute; that all Maratta princes who have of late been injuriouſly deprived of their property, ſhall be reſtored to their hereditary poſſeſſions; that the extended dominions of their inveterate enemy, Hyder Ally, ſhall be retrenched, and his power limited within the bounds of moderation; and that the preſent eſtabliſhment of their own government, ſhall be ſolemnly ratified and confirmed.

An aſſociation of power being ſecured in this manner, and by various other means, ſuperior to that of all the remaining ſtates of India, a congreſs or diet may be confidently aſſembled, for the avowed purpoſe of effecting a revolution on the principles of humanity and juſtice.

Having thus endeavoured to render this plan of peace triumphant over all oppoſition in India, let us next conſider whether it might not be ſucceſsfully oppoſed by the jealouſy and envy of the commercial nations of Europe.

The Dutch are not in a condition to thwart the meaſures of Britain in India, by any power of their own; but they can co-operate with France for the ſame purpoſe, ſo long as that ambitious ſtate has ſo convenient an eſtabliſhment in the Indian ſeas, for carrying on deep and dangerous intrigues, and ſchemes of conqueſt and commerce. It will therefore be neceſſary to remove that impending danger, by the reduction

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of the iſlands of Mauritius and Bourbon, and by ſimply ſeizing a poſſeſſion of right in Roderigue and the Seychell iſlands. The poſſeſſion of Mauritius and Bourbon, will prove an acquiſition of greater utility than can yet have been conceived in Britain. It will open a new and extenſive field for vending the commodities of India to foreigners. It will overthrow all other European eſtabliſhments in India; and thus ſecure that country, hitherto ſo much diſtracted, from all European intrigues and machinations for the future. It will maintain, without national expence, the poſſeſſion of iſlands capable of increaſing the national wealth, and of affording more ſecure, more ſeaſonable, and more plentiful refreſhment to the Company's navigation, than St. Helena, Johanna, the Cape of Good Hope, or Madagaſcar. No conſideration whatever ſhould ever induce Great Britain to reſtore to the French Pondicherry, Chandernagore, Mahe, or Carrical.

The Portugueſe, although the firſt European traders and ſettlers in Aſia, and that they once poſſeſſed a moſt abſolute, as well as a moſt extenſive dominion over the native ſtates, have now no other eſtabliſhment than Goa on the coaſt of Malabar; Damain, which is almoſt wholly abandoned, in Guzzarat; and the ſmall Iſland of Macao, at the mouth of the river Canton in China. Bandelle, upon the river Houghly, has been long abandoned; and the Portugueſe, having loſt their grant, have nothing to ſhew in ſupport of a claim to it. Goa has long been a pernicious receptacle for criminals, idlers, and proſtitutes; and ſerves, under the cloak of religion, as a ſanctuary to murderers

derers and aſſaſſins; which encourages the commiſſion of every crime which reſentment, revenge, and every outrageous paſſion can ſuggeſt, to the motley offspring of original Portugueſe and Hallachores *, diverſified by indiſcriminate intercourſe with all the nations who, ſince the diſcovery of the paſſage by the Cape, have viſited the coaſts of Hindoſtan. The colour of that generation is not now to be diſtinguiſhed from that of the Parria tribe †; but petticoats, and croſſes ſuſpended from the necks of the females as ſignals of familiar acceſs, guide Europeans to their embraces; whence ſprings a ſpecies of people of a fairer outſide, but with minds, if poſſible, ſtill more diabolical.

This mixed race, from the cauſes I have now mentioned, have ſpread amazingly over all the European eſtabliſhments, and are the moſt treacherous, dangerous, and in every reſpect, the worſt people in India. It is impoſſible to reform them by education, by admonition, or by example. They ſhould therefore receive every poſſible political diſcountenance ‡.

The eſtabliſhment of Goa, inſtead of yielding either public or private revenues, is a dead weight upon the incumbered ſtate of Portugal; and if the court of Liſbon were not reſtrained by pride, they would ſurrender it with pleaſure to any other power, and eſteem that deprivation no ſmall advantage. As to Macao, it is in reality

* Wretched outcaſts from every tribe or caſte in India.

† The ſame with the Hallachores.

‡ It is remarkable, that the offspring of Europeans by Mooriſh women, differ very materially from the deteſtable race I have now deſcribed, both in their principles and natural diſpoſitions.

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under Chineſe government, though nominally Portugueſe. It exiſts by the occaſional uſe which is made of its ports and warehouſes by other European nations: and this is owing to the diffidence of the Chineſe in European principles, and the reſtraint which they conſequently impoſe on all European commerce †.

The Daniſh Eaſt India Company having ſold their poſſeſſions to the king of Denmark, the trade to India is laid open to individuals. The ſettlements of Tranquebar on the Coromandel coaſt, and of Serampore on the river Houghly, are too inconſiderable to be regarded in the light of rivals to thoſe of England. They would inſenſibly diſſolve and die away, if their trade were not carried on as remittances of Britiſh fortunes to Europe. Let but the two independent ſovereignties here recommended, be eſtabliſhed, and the half-mouldered walls of Tranquebar and Serampore will, within a few years, ſink down into rubbiſh, or become an eaſy purchaſe for the ſake of above 30,000 uſeful manufacturers ‡.

The Engliſh Eaſt India Company ſhould, for many obvious reaſons, obtain, by all amicable means, from the Portugueſe, their pretenſions to the Niccabar Iſlands.

The injuſtice done to Mr. William Bolts, in refuſing to his Britiſh creditors, after he was declared a bankrupt in England, the benefit and indulgence of the Company's conſtitution, that they might recover to their own uſes, the debts

† It is remarkable, that Europeans conſider the Chineſe, as the moſt diſingenuous and perfidious people in the world; and that the Chineſe, in their turn, declare that they can place no truſt in an European.

‡ Who lived in Tranquebar, or in adjacent villages.

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owing to him by natives, under pretence that the trade whereby the debts were contracted, was contrary to the Company's bye-laws†, will vindicate, on his part, the indulgence of a diſpoſition naturally vindictive, while he wreaks his vengeance at the only period, and in the only place where his knowledge and genius were able to gain credit and confidence. Driven to the laſt extremity of diſtreſs, he was ſupported by Britiſh ſubjects in London: patroniſed by them, he offered his ſervices to the court of Liſbon; but they were not accepted. Diſappointed in his views in Portugal, he accidentally procured a commiſſion from the court of Vienna, to form commercial eſtabliſhments in Aſia. A ſpeculative, inventive, and perſevering genius, like Mr. Bolts, might have ſucceeded in the character of coadjutor to M. St. Lubin, in his negociations for France with the Marrattas and Hyder Ally, and have formed a coalition between the German Emperor and the king of France, dangerous, in the higheſt degree, to the Britiſh intereſt in Hindoſtan. But, as a ſpeculative merchant, he muſt have ſunk under accumulated loſſes and charges, and never have returned to Leghorn, Trieſt, or Vienna, had not ſome of the principal members of the Company's own government in Bombay and Madras, furniſhed him with the means of ſending proofs of his abilities, and of the performance of his promiſes, in

† There was a palpable impropriety in a high and reſpectable corporation's deſcending to ſhew perſonal reſentment againſt an alien, who had been forced to diſmiſs himſelf from their ſervice, and had been diſgracefully removed from their ſettlements for notorious offences.

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three large ſhips compleatly laden, under imperial colours, into the Mediterranean. With this countenance and aſſiſtance, he has erected about ſix flag ſtaffs, on which imperial colours are occaſionally diſplayed on the coaſts of Malabar and Coromandel; the Car-Niccabars claimed by Denmark, and Rio-de-la Goa, on the ſouth-eaſt coaſt of Africa. The aſſiſtance afforded to Mr. Bolts, by the Company's ſervants, and creditable houſes in trade under the Company's protection, was a direct violation of poſitive orders from the Court of Directors, which were publiſhed in ſeveral preſidencies. A conduct ſo injurious, and even ſo inſolent, calls aloud for cenſure. To deprive the delinquents of their offices, would be the moſt mild, and at the ſame time the moſt effectual method of defeating the ſucceſs of Mr. Bolts's ſchemes and operations in Hindoſtan hereafter; and at the ſame time, of rendering perſons in the ſervice, or under the protection of the Eaſt India Company, more tender of breaking through their orders, and ſacrificing their political rights in future. I am, &c.

LETTER XXXVIII.

To J——— M———, Eſq; London.

Calcutta, October 23, 1779.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

THE great number of theſe letters which you will receive at the ſame time, will give you ſome idea of my preſent manner of life, which

which is ſedentary; and, from diſappointments in my original objects in coming hither, principally dedicated to enquiries concerning this country, and the ſpeculations which I tranſmit in ſuch abundance to you, Sir, and through your hands to Mr. R. W. and others of our friends, who are much intereſted in the affairs of India.—Probably, ſome of my ideas may appear to my friends chimerical. I am not inſenſible that I am animated by a degree of enthuſiaſm on the ſubject of theſe letters. To be in any degree inſtrumental in the eſtabliſhment of juſtice, and all the concomitant arts and bleſſings of peace, in this populous and much-injured country; to open a few hints, which, duly improved, might lead Great Britain to the higheſt pitch of proſperity and glory, is a tranſporting purſuit, which naturally rouſes and warms the mind. Many things are to be changed, I acknowledge, before the object of that purſuit can be attained: and projected political changes are generally ſtigmatized with the epithet romantic. But though ſome political projects may be romantic, all are not ſuch. To reject any ſcheme, on pretence that it is wholly viſionary, is the ordinary refuge of indolent minds, unwilling to take the trouble of examining it cloſely, and in all its parts.

Political have often been compared to natural bodies; and the analogy between them is very ſtriking in many reſpects. But there is this remarkable difference, that a decay in the political is more eaſily cured than a conſumption in the natural body. If we examine modern as well as ancient hiſtory, we ſhall find, that wiſdom and

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ſound policy have in fact effected more difficult, but never more glorious revolutions, than it is in the power of Great Britain to bring about in the great peninſula of Hindoſtan. Have patience with me, my good friend, while I go on a little farther, with a plan for ſettling the affairs of India: and in return for this indulgence, I promiſe you by and by, a ſeries of more entertaining letters.

Having already given a ſketch of the plan I propoſe, I come now to fill it up, by drawing various lines, which may ſerve to deſcribe and limit the different rights and pretenſions of all the powers of Hindoſtan, whether ſupreme or ſubordinate.

It is propoſed then, that the revenues of the Hindoſtan empire ſhall be raiſed from the provinces of Delhi, Agra, Ajimere, &c. &c. which may be called a part of the proper imperial demeſne; from a renewed ceſſion, on favourable and honourable conditions to the original chiefs and their deſcendants of ſuch parts of the Rohilcund territories as are ſituated between the Ganges and the Jumna; together with ſuch tributes from the other tributary ſtates as ſhall ſupport and maintain on a liberal ſcale the government and dignity of the empire, as well by means of that influence which naturally attends ſovereignty and wealth, as by the terror of its arms, in caſes of rebellion, or of depredation by ſubordinate princes, on each other.

That the crown of Great Britain ſhall be inveſted with an independent ſovereignty over the provinces of Bengal, Bahar, and Oriſſa, and the zemindary occupied by the Rajah Cheytſing, of

Gauzipore; Caunpore, Benaras, &c. with all their rights, properties, prerogatives, privileges, emoluments, immunities, and dependencies, with the ſovereignty of the hilly province of Catac, and of all the eaſt coaſt of the peninſula, from the province of Midnapore, in Bengal, to Cape Comorin, comprehending the northern Circars, the Carnatic, Tanjore, and Madura; without invading the rights of nabobs, rajahs, and other legal poſſeſſors, according to their original tenures, as feudatories, tributaries, or dependents of the empire; and without violating religious tenets, cuſtoms, or caſtes, which are not derogatory to the principles of humanity, and the laws of nature. That the crown of Great Britain ſhall alſo receive quiet and undiſturbed poſſeſſion of all ſeas, and practicable bays and inlets, from Ajengo to the river Indus, except thoſe already actually occupied by the Dutch and Portugueſe, together with the ſovereignty of the iſlands of Bombay, Salſette, and Caranjar, the promontory of Baſſeen and Surat, with all its original appendages.—That the Maratta ſtates and Hyder Ally, as well as the other princes who poſſeſs the Malabar and Guzzarat coaſts, ſhall yield up to Britain all their ſea-ports and naval armaments, never to be re-eſtabliſhed; but that it ſhall be lawful to employ unarmed veſſels for the benefit and eaſe of trade. That the Britiſh ſovereign ſhall ſolemnly engage to keep, at all times, a naval eſtabliſhment on the coaſt, ſufficient to protect the navigation, trade, and coaſts of Hindoſtan. And that the ſtates ſurrendering Baſſeen and Caranjar, the ſea-ports, towns,

towns, and all the dependencies of Surat, ſhall receive ſuch an annual ſubſidy, as ſhall be deemed reaſonable, after making an adequate allowance for their proportions of the benefits to accrue from the naval eſtabliſhment† to be ſupported by Britain. That for the more effectual and permanent maintenance of the navy, the native princes ſhall engage to ſupply the Britiſh government, for ever, with all the teak-wood which their countries produce more than is neceſſary for their own private occaſions, upon paying a certain ſtipulated price for the ſame on delivery thereof, upon ſuch parts of the ſea-beach as are acceſſible to veſſels proper for carrying it off.—That in conſideration of the ceſſion of Catac, and as an equivalent to the Nizam or Soubah of Deccan, for relinquiſhing the claim to quit-rent from the five northern Circars, and for the ſovereignty of them thus conveyed to the crown of Britain, that crown ſhall engage to pay the emperor an annual ſubſidy of thirty lacks of rupees: which ſubſidy ſhall be paid in Britiſh and India merchandize to the value of twenty lacks, and the remaining ten lacks in the current money of Bengal. That the emperor ſhall conſtitute a complete military brigade under a Britiſh commandant, ſtaff and officers, to be continually ſtationed in the Duab and Rohilcund: the eſtabliſhment of which ſhall not be leſs than thirty lacks a year, to be paid by the emperor in the

† The natural revenues belonging to the eſtabliſhment of Surat, when originally veſted in the Company; thoſe of Salſette, Baſſeen, Carajan, Choul, Carawar, Geriah, Mangaloor, &c. would greatly exceed every probable eſtabliſhment of a very reſpectable marine.

current coins, with proper allowances for differences in the exchange, by Tuncaws or aſſignments on certain parcels of the revenues of thoſe provinces†.—That the king of Britain ſhall ſtation a brigade of at leaſt equal force in the province of Bahar, and the zemindary of Cheytſing; another in Bengal; two under the preſidency of Madras, and one under that of Bombay: the whole to act at all times in concert with thoſe of the emperor, and as allies offenſive and defenſive, as well to repel invaſions, as to preſerve the peace of all Hindoſtan, and to ſecure to each ſeparate ſtate, the quiet and uninterrupted enjoyment of ſuch territories and rights as ſhall be aſcertained by the general eſtabliſhment.

That the nabob of Oude ſhall be reſtricted to his paternal inheritance; be excluded for ever from Cheytſing's country; and that he ſhall pay a fixed annual tribute to the emperor.—That the original Rohilla chiefs be reſtored to the poſſeſſion of all Rohilcund, as tributaries of the empire; but that they ſhall pay quit-rents as zemindars, for lands lying in the Duab, while in every other reſpect they ſhall enjoy the privileges and dignities of demeſne lords; and as to the provinces lying north-eaſt of the Ganges, and ſouth-weſt of the Jumna, that they ſhall enjoy them, on paying tribute, as feudatories of the empire.—That the Jauts ſhall acknowledge themſelves feudatories, and pay a ſmall annual tribute towards the general protection.—That the Seiks

† It is underſtood that the emperor ſhall have other military eſtabliſhments proportioned to his revenues; and that the military eſtabliſhments of the other ſtates ſhall be regulated by the general ſyſtem.

ſhall

ſhall enter into the general alliance, offenſive and defenſive, as an independent ſtate.—That the provinces of Bundlecund, thoſe of Gohud, thoſe of Berar, the ſoubah of the Deccan, the kingdom of Myſore and its dependencies, the rajahſhips of Samorine, Colaſtria, Bednure, Sounda, Malawar†, &c. ſhall be declared ſubject to the empire, and ſhall pay tribute.—That the Maratta ſtate, with all its dependencies, ſhall hold of the empire, and enter into the general alliance, offenſive and defenſive, with ſeparate ſtipulations‡.—That the kingdom of Travancore, and the ſeveral petty ſtates on the peninſula, which are at preſent free from all ſuperiority, ſhall be declared feudatories of the empire.—And that every endeavour be uſed, to unite in the grand alliance propoſed, the king of Candy, and the northern tribe of the people of the iſland of Ceylon, but without ſubmitting them to any charge or tribute: an object probably of great future utility, and which, by operating on their deſires of emancipation from the Dutch government, might eaſily be effected.

It is farther propoſed, That all the articles which relate to commerce, ſhall be digeſted with peculiar attention and deliberation.—That the inland trade ſhall be as free as circumſtances will permit; that the coaſting trade ſhall be laid under certain political reſtrictions; that the export trade, not coaſt-wiſe, be carried on with ſpecial

† Theſe and all other rajahſhips to be reſtored to their reſpective lawful princes.

‡ They ſhall pay no tribute; but they ſhall quit claim to chout, beyond their own and ſubordinate territories.

clearances

clearances and paſſports from the Engliſh Company or the Britiſh government.—That the king of Perſia and the Lama of Thibet, be invited to accede to a general alliance of mutual friendſhip, and free intercourſe of trade, with the emperor of Hindoſtan and the king of Britain.—That every poſſible encouragement be given to commercial intercouſe by the Indus, the Jumna, the Ganges; and over land with Candahar, Caſſimere, and other parts of Perſia, with the Seiks, Affghans, and other natives inhabiting the countries lying between Perſia and Tibet.—That a communication be opened between the interior provinces, particularly Rungpore, through Napal, with Tibet, for fine wool, gold, and horſes, in exchange for Britiſh woollens and the manufactures of India.—To eſtabliſh a port and dock at Chattigong, or to obtain, by a fair treaty, ſome ſecure port, and alſo teak-wood, from the king of Pegu†.—To obtain a right, by aſſignment from the crown of Denmark, in the Niccabar iſlands, which will ſerve as places for the accommodation of veſſels, for making ſhell-lime, for furniſhing building timber, and for eſtabliſhing an uſeful branch of commerce in beetle-nuts, cocoa-nuts, ambergris, and probably ſome other profitable commodities.

And laſtly, it is propoſed, That all controverſies between the ſubordinate princes of India, be referred for ultimate deciſion, to the emperor of Hindoſtan and the Britiſh viceroy repreſenting

† Teak-wood may be got in abundance, and cheap, from either coaſt of Sumatra; moſt probably from the Andaman, and certainly from the Niccabar iſlands.

the

the Majeſty of Great Britain; or by a general diet to be held triennially, alternately at Delhi and Calcutta; and that all the contracting powers of Hindoſtan ſhall conjunctly and ſeverally guarantee to each other, and enforce the ſtrict and faithful obſervance and performance of all the articles, conditions, and ſtipulations literally expreſſed, or plainly implied in the words of the grand treaty: ſo that the meaning of what may appear doubtful, may be conſtrued agreeably to the fair and unconſtrained principles of equity, juſtice, and the preſervation of peace.

I am, &c. &c.

LETTER XXXIX.

To J—— M——, Eſq; London.

Calcutta, October 25, 1779.

IT is a fact of notoriety, that the Eaſt India Company's navigation is conducted upon principles detrimental to themſelves, and unſerviceable to the nation; and under ſo little authority or ſubordination, that the command of a ſhip is conſidered merely as a job to accommodate the man who purchaſes the command of her†. The covenants of a charter party, the

† The report of the Committee of the Houſe of Commons in 1773, founded upon the clear evidence and accurate computations of Mr. Snodgraſs, the Company's ſurveyor of ſhipping, Mr. Cole, their freight accomptant, Sir Richard Hotham, John Durand, Eſq. and Sir Charles Raymond, ſhew the abuſes and loſſes, and demonſtrate the propriety of new-modelling the Company's navigation on a ſyſtem entirely new. Government having the means of information on its higheſt record, the reform is within their knowledge, nor can it be effectual but by that ſuperior power.

orders

orders of the Court of Directors, and the controuling authority veſted in the preſidencies abroad, have ſo little authority or influence over maſters of ſhips (where the ſervice or intereſt of their employers interfere with their private emoluments) that they ſcarcely become an object of momentary attention. The death of ſeamen, and of the Company's recruits; delays in bringing cargoes to the markets of Europe; intire loſſes of valuable cargoes; a total neglect of each other in the greateſt diſtreſs; an improper ſtowage of the Company's goods, ariſing from ſiniſter views of private trade; all theſe evils are incurred by the Company's ſhip-maſters, for the ſake of procuring a market for a few groce of wine and porter, or for the conveniency of a paſſenger who pays handſomely for an apartment, and the ſtowage of a long liſt of packages.

It has been ſaid, that the Company, inſtead of chartering ſhips, intend to entertain a navy. I am fully perſuaded, that ſuch a meaſure might be ſo conducted, as to be uſeful, in a high degree, to themſelves, and ſtill more ſo to the nation. The enormous magnitude of wealth and commerce, which the Eaſt India poſſeſſions, trade, and navigation, promiſe to pour into Britain, muſt intereſt the Britiſh legiſlature ſo heartily in India affairs, as to make them a primary object of miniſterial attention. It will of courſe become an important political object, to eſtabliſh a marine for the ſervice of the Eaſt India Company; which will be maintained at leſs than one half of the expence incurred by the crown, with not more than a tenth part of that loſs of Britiſh ſeamen,

men, which is ſuſtained by the preſent ſyſtem; and which, at the ſame time, will have a greater influence on the minds of the native princes, and alſo extend greater protection and ſecurity to thoſe dominions and that commerce, which a royal navy is now deſtined to protect and ſuccour. Thus may the national expence be diminiſhed, without a reduction of its naval power, or even an encreaſe of the charges of the Eaſt India Company. If ſuch a ſyſtem ſhall be adopted, whether by chance, or from a conviction of its utility, it will naturally follow, that Bombay ſhall be made the principal dock and yard; that there ſhall be another for ſhip-building in Surat; and that the Company ſhall have a repairing dock and naval yard on the Thames. By ſending from Britain all the heavy iron work of the ſhipping, cordage, ſail-cloth†, anchors, blocks, and ſhip-chandlery articles, the Britiſh manufactures will be encouraged as much as they are at preſent. A great national benefit will ariſe from the ſaving of heavy timber for the uſe of the royal navy, and the general ſyſtem will operate as a new mode of clear remittances to Britain, while it will render her leſs dependent not only on Sweden and Norway, but alſo on North America.

As it would be unjuſt not to continue in pay, or to purchaſe from the owners, thoſe ſhips which were built, and conſtantly employed, on the faith of the Company's trade flowing

† If it ſhould be thought political, there is not a doubt but hemp may be had in abundance from the province of Bahar, and the Ceytſing zemindary. This would reduce the import of that article from Ruſſia.

through

through the uſual channel of conveyance, matters muſt be ſo managed, that new ſhips ſhall be built in the Eaſt only at ſtated periods: and if the number of ſhips built there, cannot keep pace with the calls of trade, and the diſcharge of contract ſhips in regular rotation, the deficiency muſt be made up, either by ſhips built in the Company's dock in London, or by country ſhips purchaſed in India; a circumſtance very unlikely, however, to happen, as it is almoſt certain, that at Bombay and Surat, ſix, ſeven, or even eight complete ſhips may be built annually for the firſt term of eight years †. This period would complete the exiſting contracts: and thus, before the temporary ſhips built or bought for the Company would be out of their ſervice, a new marine would be completed of the hard, incorruptible wood, and the ſtaunch manufactures of Hindoſtan. This kind of wood, to which I now allude, is not only remarkable for reſiſting the deſtructive effects of ſea and land vermin, but it is even proof againſt cannon balls. Such veſſels, therefore, are not only more fit to run from ten to fifteen voyages to and from Europe, than ſhips built in that quarter of the world; but they alſo yield more confident ſecurity againſt the attacks of enemies.

Theſe ſhips ſhould be ſo conſtructed in form and ſtrength, as to be capable of mounting, on

† After the completion of the number, it may be preſumed, that one, or at moſt two new ſhips annually, would uphold the eſtabliſhment; and, beſides employing the artificers, and operating as a beneficial remittance, it would be ſerving the nation eſſentially, that the Company ſhould build two line of battle ſhips, and one or two frigates annually, at a ſtated price, to be accounted for by government in the territorial claim.

any

any emergency, from 56 to 64 guns, of twelve, eighteen, and twenty four pounders, and particular attention ſhould be paid to thoſe deſtined for the Bengal trade, whoſe draught of water muſt neceſſarily leſſen their bulk. They ſhould alſo be conſtructed for the purpoſe of faſt ſailing.

As improvements of all kinds, which are not eaſily incorporated with old, may, without difficulty or danger, be adopted in the formation of a new ſyſtem, the Eaſt India Company's marine might be conſtituted on a plan infinitely more perfect than that of any naval eſtabliſhment exiſting. For this purpoſe, the Company ſhould avail themſelves of all the genius and experience, both of their own and other countries.

Should the eſtabliſhment of an Eaſt India marine ever become an object of ſerious deliberation, I ſhould humbly ſubmit to the conſideration of the Company, the obſervations I have already made in this letter, and alſo the following propoſals.

That ſeamen in the Eaſt India Company's ſervice ſhall, at all times, be exemped from being impreſſed into the royal navy;—that an hoſpital ſhall be eſtabliſhed in Britain, into which ſeamen maimed, or otherwiſe diſabled in the ſervice, ſhall find an aſylum for life, and into which the Poplar hoſpital ſhall be incorporated; — that ſeamen, ſerving faithfully for a certain number of years, ſhall, if incapable of further laborious ſervice, be entitled to that aſylum;—that one other hoſpital for diſabled Laſcars, Portugueſe, and marine Sepoys, be conſtituted on the iſland of Bombay; that to the end ſuch ſeamen may meet with due encouragement on the one ſide, and the Company's

pany's ſervice be regularly and effectually performed at a reaſonable rate, in proportion to the advantages and ſecurity which it offers, on the other; parliament ſhall indulge the Company with an excluſive exerciſe of ſuch marine bye-laws as ſhall not violate the ſacred principles of the Britiſh conſtitution, but which may have the happy tendency to reduce that uſeful claſs of people to a ſtate of temperance, obedience, and duty;—that one third part of the complement of every ſhip's company, ſtationed in India, ſhall conſiſt of Laſcars and native Portugueſe; and that the marines ſerving on board ſhall be compoſed of ſuch ſepoys as have reſolution to overcome, without the exerciſe of compulſion, their native ſuperſtitious prejudices †: a meaſure not only ſalutary to the Europeans ſerving in thoſe warm climates on board the ſame ſhips, but particularly ſaving to the Company's finances, and their proviſions‡.

That the maſters and officers ſhall wear an uniform, and have rank in India; that they ſhall riſe by gradations to the higheſt ſtations (except that of an admiral, who ſhall be an officer of that rank in the royal navy, and be veſted with the chief command of the ſtationary naval eſtabliſhment for three years, or until relieved) with a conſtant power of reſervation in favour of ſuperior

† An eſtabliſhment of a corps of ſepoy marines may become the moſt uſeful body of men in India, as they will at all times be equally capable of ſerving on land, and ready to go by ſea from one preſidency to another, for defence, or to go upon any foreign expedition; which the generality of ſepoy corps will not readily do, if at all.

‡ The monthly expence of a Laſcar ſoldier in India, including his proviſions, will not exceed twenty ſhillings.

merit,

merit, and an exception to perſons declared incompetent.

That, as the ſhip's admeaſurements are always a ſtrong preſumptive proof of what their holds, &c. ought to contain, in order to prevent abuſes, every package ſhipped, either in Europe or Aſia, ſhall be meaſured by a ſworn officer; or that packages ſhall be made of certain eſtabliſhed dimenſions, that when the lading is completed, the quantum on that officer's book ſhall ſtand as a cheque on the ſhip's officers in ſtowing the cargo. Allowances may be made for goods that are not meaſurable in packages by ſtated rules*.—That the captain and each officer ſhall give in fair and correct journals of every voyage, deſcribing the courſes, currents, variations of the compaſs, bearings of head-lands, eminences, points, bays, &c. ſoundings, and ſuch remarks as may tend to afford additional knowledge of winds, currents, ſhoals, and coaſts; and that perſons, properly qualified, ſhall be appointed to reviſe and examine theſe journals, in order to extract ſuch new information as they may be found to contain, of public utility.—That the Company ſhall be conſtrained to bear the charge of two ſmall veſſels, com-

* It is notorious, that ſhips can carry a larger quantity of tons in merchandize than the carpenter's admeaſurement, and that this proportion increaſes more in large than in ſmall veſſels. Experience will prove a guide, as well as a cheque on the ſtowage. On this principle, and the rule of practice, the Company's freight may be brought home conſiderably under twenty pounds per ton on an average, for all their inveſtments, which generally coſt them, with demorrage, &c. above thirty eight pounds per ton. Mr. Snodgraſs eſtimates at thirty two pounds, excluſive of demorrage, and the demorrage may be computed at fifty four thouſand pounds annually on an average, equal to a fifth part of the chartered and ſurplus tonnage freight, which on an average of twenty years, from 1753 to 1772, amounted to two hundred ninety one thouſand, four hundred and eighty two pounds.

pletely

pletely provided with navigators, aſtronomers' inſtruments, and other neceſſaries, for ſurveying with preciſion and accuracy, the coaſts, and examining the changes and courſes of currents, from the Cape of Good Hope to China, and thence by the iſland of Seram, and the Moluccas, to the ſouth-weſt extremity of Madagaſcar;—and that ſuch uſeful improvements as the Dutch and French have eſtabliſhed in their trading ſhips for the more perfect accommodation of officers and ſeamen, as well as in the art of navigation, ſhall be adopted.

That in time of profound peace in Europe, the Company ſhall maintain a navy, to conſiſt of four ſhips of the line, as many ſtout frigates, and ſix faſt-ſailing armed packets, beſides three packets conſtantly communicating between the Cape of Good Hope (as the reſidence of an agent) and St. Helena, and occaſionally with Britain and India.

That in caſe of a French, Dutch, or Spaniſh war, or open hoſtility, the Company ſhall entertain ten ſhips of the line §, and as many capital frigates, beſides the ordinary eſtabliſhment of country and St. Helena packets, with their proper complement of ſeamen, &c.

In further conſideration whereof, and of the management and uſeful proviſion made for ſeamen in the Company's ſervice, that the government ſhall requiſh its claim to Greenwich hoſpital money from all their ſeamen; and ſhall fur-

§ Theſe will ſerve alſo as convoys to and from Europe, provided that ſquadrons of the royal navy cruiſe for them off the Azores, and accompany them out as far as Madeira, or clear of the Bay of Biſcay.

thermore,

thermore, by law, enable the Company to retain and deduct after the rate of five per cent. on all wages, rating all degrees of perſons according to the ſtandard wages of able ſeamen, to accumulate as a fund, and to be veſted in truſtees, with the powers of a body corporate.

That every mariner maimed in action, or by accident, in the execution of duty, or who ſhall, for ſeven years ſucceſſively, ſerve the Company's marine, and allow the five per cent. rate; or who in their ſervice, by age or natural infirmity, is rendered incapable of further ſervice, ſhall be entitled to the aſylum of the Company's hoſpital for the remainder of his natural life; and that the widows and children of ſeamen, in theſe circumſtances ſhall be provided for †.

That ſeamen thus diſabled and penſioned, having wives or children, may, at their option, withdraw with their wives and children, and in lieu of penſion in the public hoſpital, receive forty ſhillings per quarter, ſending regular certificates.

That the wages and effects of run ſeamen, of perſons dying without known kindred, and generally, all marine forfeitures in the ſea ſervice, ſhall be appropriated to this fund, with reaſonable reſervations to favour legal claimants.

That the ſurplus or unappropriated monies which have ariſen from the intereſt of Lord Clive's bounty, ſhall be ceded to this fund; the concurrence of the preſent Lord Clive, and the releaſe of his reverſionary claim, being obtained.

† Widows may be uſefully employed as nurſes, &c. in hoſpitals; children (male) put to common ſchools within the hoſpital, until qualified to become apprentices to the ſea, to ſail-makers, caulkers, block-makers, rope-makers, blackſmiths, &c. afterwards they may ſerve the Company.

That

That a benefaction of 500l. to this hoſpital, ſhall intitle the donor, during life, to one vote in all queſtions and elections in the India-Houſe, as a proprietor of ſtock; for a benefaction of 1000l. two votes, together with an excluſive privilege, in either caſe, to vote by proxy.

That governors, preſidents, counſellors, and captains of capital ſhips, ſhall on their appointments to theſe ſtations, engage to ſink certain proportional ſums in this fund; and that agents for the ſale of prizes in time of war, ſhall account to the truſtees for a certain proportion of their commiſſion to be ſunk into this fund.

That as reduced ſeamen, although unfit for heavy labour on ſhip-board, may nevertheleſs be capable of uſeful ſervices and labour on ſhore; and as ſuperannuated officers may find eaſy retreats in ſuperintending different departments in the public hoſpital, there ſhall be eſtabliſhed, within the precincts thereof, an academy for the inſtruction of children of invalids and Company's ſeamen, and orphans, in the theory and practice of navigation, &c. and that a rope-work and ſail-makers loft ſhall be conſtructed, and block-makers, oakum-pickers, &c. be appointed for the uſe of the Company's marine; which would conſiderably lighten the charges of the hoſpital †.

I am, &c. &c.

† On a looſe calculation it has been computed, that after a certain term, this public ſpirited and charitable inſtitution would give comfortable protection to more than one thouſand penſioners conſtantly, beſides that it would be a nurſery for youths for the ſea, and profeſſions relating thereto.

LETTER

LETTER XL.

To J—— M——, Eſq; London.

Calcutta, October 29, 1779.

——THE iſland of Mauritius is ſituated in the 20th degree of ſouth latitude, and 56 eaſt longitude from London. It is of a circular figure, mountainous in the centre and flat around the coaſt, containing about 100,000 Engliſh acres. The ſoil is but unkindly, of a brick-colour, and in ſome parts ſtrongly impregnated with iron ore. There are ſome large rivers, which riſe at the bottom or in the ſides of the mountains. There is not above one fifth part of the country under cultivation, the remaining four being mountainous or filled with woods. There is on this iſland ſome good building timber, and a great deal of yellow, black, and party-coloured ebony. This laſt ſpecies of ebony is reckoned to be of value, and is never burnt, as the others frequently are. There is a ſmelting manufactory for the iron ore, and ſome powder mills. There are in Mauritius two or three ſugar-plantations, and it has produced very good cotton and indigo: it is indeed to theſe two laſt-mentioned commodities that the ſoil ſeems beſt adapted. All the tropical fruits, plants, and roots, are raiſed here; but they are neither ſo luxuriant nor ſo highly flavoured as thoſe of Bourbon, nor ſo abundant as to ſerve the inhabitants four months in the year: their ſupplies for about eight months in twelve come from

Bourbon, the Cape of Good Hope, Batavia, and Europe.

The ſpiceries of Ceylon, Amboyna, and Banda, promiſe to flouriſh in this iſland. In the pariſh of Pamplemonſe, the king of France maintains, at a conſiderable expence, and in good condition, a ſpacious botanical garden, divided into four parts, repreſenting the great quarters of the earth; in which the trees, ſhrubs, plants, flowers, herbs, roots, &c. of each are reſpectively planted; pieces of wood being fixed in the ground by each, deſcribing its name, native country, and qualities. In this garden cinnamon and cloves thrive amazingly. All around the iſland (except ſmall inlets oppoſite to ſome bays) at a tolerable diſtance from the ſhore, there is a reef of coral rock, which ſhelters the intermediate ſpace of water, makes it quite ſmooth and ſerene, and prevents the formation of ſuch heavy ſurges as, rolling and breaking on the ſhore, might render landing difficult, if not impracticable.

The fields and wood abound with deer, hares, rabbits, and flying game. The inhabitants are remarkable for their hoſpitality, and the ladies who are natives of this iſland, for their beauty.

Mauritius is the metropolis of the French African iſlands, the chief ſeat of government, the emporium of commerce, and the aſylum of exiles from France. The inhabitants are not ſo independent in their circumſtances, nor ſo eaſy in their minds as thoſe of Bourbon, although they affect more dreſs and gaiety, and have better houſes and furniture. Every third perſon you

you meet of a fair complexion, wears at his button-hole the order of St. Louis.

As the poſition of the town of Port Louis, and the fortifications defending the entrance of the harbour, are well known, I ſhall not give any particular deſcription of them. I cannot, however, but obſerve, that the practice of warping ſhips into that port, is merely a political ſtratagem, intended to impreſs the world with a notion that it is of the moſt difficult acceſs. The paſſage for ſhips is clear and eaſy, and every afternoon during the 28 days I was there, there was a conſtant ſteady and briſk gale directly into the harbour.

The iſland of Bourbon is ſituated in the 21ſt degree of ſouth latitude, and 54th eaſt longitude from London. Its figure is nearly circular. Perhaps there is not a ſpot on the face of the earth ſo worthy of the attention of naturaliſts as this iſland. It contains three high mountains, which are often ſeen at the diſtance of 30 leagues: and are the higheſt land I ever ſaw, except the Pike of Teneriffe. On the ſummit of one of theſe mountains, which is in the ſouth-eaſt quarter of the iſland, there is a volcano which frequently emits ſmoke, flames, and aſhes. This volcano exhibits an awful but beautiful proſpect at night, when it vomits flames, and fills the ſurrounding heavens with particles of fire. Of the three mountains of Bourbon, this alone is barren and uninhabited. The mountain which is reputed the higheſt, riſes in the centre of the iſland, and to the northward of it appears a ridge of hills, called the Palaiſes, one ſide of which, bold,

abrupt, and ſublime, forms a ſtupendous precipice, in perpendicular heighth two thouſand French fathoms, overhanging a large river, which ſometimes glides ſmoothly along, and at others falls in rough caſcades. In reſpect of ſize, Bourbon is nearly equal to Mauritius. The ſoil, which is in ſome parts black, and in others gray, is ſuperlatively fruitful, and improves in quality in proportion as it approaches even to the tops of eminences and mountains. The windward ſide, and the quarter of St. Luſan on the eaſt ſide, are level lands watered by very fine rivers, particularly the great river d'Abord, which precipitates itſelf into a diſtrict the moſt beautiful of the whole iſland, but where the landing from the ſea is difficult and full of danger.

In the latitude of twenty one degrees this iſland produces wheat, cabbages, turnips, carrots, artichokes, peaſe, beans, and garden fruits and roots equal in ſize and flavour to any I ever ſaw in Europe. It produces alſo the ſugar-cane, coffee, cotton, indigo, and all Weſt India fruits, ſuperior to any I ever ſaw in any of the American iſlands. Its rice is not inferior to that of either Carolina; and its mangoes are equal to any in Hindoſtan. The poultry are the largeſt I ever ſaw, and in every reſpect excel thoſe of all other countries.

The ladies of Bourbon are remarkably tall, and elegantly formed; their complexions beautiful red and white, and their features the moſt delicate and handſome that can be imagined. In figure, complexion, and features, the men reſemble

ble the women, only that the former are more muſcular.—I dwell a little on the extraordinary beauty of the natives of the iſland of Bourbon, becauſe it is a very ſingular circumſtance, to find elegance of ſhape, delicacy of features, and bloom of complexion, united in the torrid zone.

The paſture of this iſland is not well adapted to the breed of ſheep, but it abounds with goats, ſmall horned cattle, and ſmall hardy horſes. The inhabitants of Bourbon are ſtill more hoſpitable than thoſe of Mauritius. They are frank, chearful, and polite with more ſincerity. Every repaſt begins with a glaſs of brandy, and the tables are plentiful and elegant, being furniſhed with butcher's meat, and a great variety of fowls, fiſh, and vegetables.

But the enjoyments of the gay and ſocial inhabitants of this enchanting iſle, are mixed with ſufferings unknown in the moſt barren and inhoſpitable countries. Contented and happy in the company of one another, they might well deſpiſe that contempt in which they are held by the poor nobleſſe of Mauritius, becauſe forſooth they are not, in general, of noble extraction: but they ſuffer ſeverer misfortunes in that iron government under which they live; the depredations of their rebellious runaway ſlaves, who occupy ſome of the inacceſſible mountains; but above all, in thoſe frequent hurricanes, which ravage their country from January to April or May.

The diſtance from Bourbon to Mauritius is about thirty ſeven leagaues, which is run from the latter to the former in the ſpace of from eighteen

eighteen to twenty four hours: but to return to Mauritius from Bourbon takes up a month, at the leaſt fourteen days, unleſs in the hurricane ſeaſon, when the wind is more variable.

The Seychell or Mahé iſlands lie a few leagues north eaſt from the north end of Madagaſcar. The French took poſſeſſion of them ſince the laſt war, and ſtationed in them a party of ſoldiers. They were before uninhabited. They yield ſome tropical proviſions, and a great many turtle, with other fiſh.

In the iſland of Seychell there is a very ſafe and commodious deep bay, with excellent anchorage, where ſhips may wood and water with great eaſe and ſafety.

At a very ſhort diſtance, I believe leſs than a league from the iſland of Seychell, lies that of Praſline. The ſoil of each is repreſented as excellent: the land throughout flat, and is ſaid to grow ſome large timber proper for building. Theſe iſlands are remarkable for producing the tree which yields a kind of cocoa-nut, repreſenting, in the moſt ſtriking manner, the figure of a human breech, thighs, &c. having a fœtid ſmell from an aperture of the fundament, like that of human excrement. The Indians, ſtruck with this reſemblance, formerly ſet an enormous value upon theſe nuts; but ſince the French traders furniſhed the market with them more plentifully, they have loſt much of their eſtimation, together with their rarity.

As theſe iſlands are capable of raiſing abundance of proviſions, ſheep, goat, and horned cattle, a ſettlement might be made on them,

very

very convenient for the Engliſh Eaſt India Company, if this paſſage ſhould be adopted by their navigation at thoſe ſeaſons when the inner paſſage between Madagaſcar and the continent is impracticable. I am, &c.

LETTER XLI.

To J—— M——, Eſq; London.

Calcutta, Nov. 2, 1779.

THE French African iſlands may be made uſeful to the Engliſh Eaſt India Company, and the Britiſh nation, in various reſpects, and the inhabitants at the ſame time rendered more happy than they ever were, or can be, under their own government. Such of the productions of theſe iſlands as are proper for the India market, might be tranſported thither in return for rice, cotton, cloths of all qualities, wrought ſilks, and ſome ſlaves. The ebony might be ſent to the China market, India, and Europe. The other articles proper for exportation might be ſent to the Britiſh market, under the ſame reſtrictions and impoſts that are laid on the produce of the Britiſh colonies in America, in ſhips chartered by the Eaſt India Company, or regiſtered in their name. Theſe iſlands would ſerve as places of refreſhment, out and home, and for ſupplying ſhips with cattle, hogs, poultry, vegetables, roots, fruits, flour, and biſcuit, all of the beſt quality, and excellent water.

The

The iſland of Mauritius, as I have hinted in a former letter, may be made a free port, for the ſale of India goods, on ſuch conditions as to ſecure a conſtant mart for India manufactures; to ſupply the Company's dominions with a ſufficient quantity of bullion; to raiſe a capital revenue, by an impoſt to the Company; to procure eaſy and ſure remittances both to the Company and to individuals; to ſecure the Engliſh dominions in India againſt French intrigues and invaſions; and in general, to improve the wealth which Britain has a right to claim from its poſſeſſions in the eaſtern hemiſphere.

But you will doubtleſs obſerve, that it is more eaſy to point out the advantages Great Britain might reap from the poſſeſſion of theſe iſlands, than to point out a mode by which that poſſeſſion might be acquired.—I am well informed that the inhabitants of Mauritius and Bourbon are by no means well affected to the French government; and that they have the higheſt notions of that liberty and happineſs which is enjoyed under that of Britain.—In order to acquire the ſovereignty of the French African iſlands, it will be proper for Great Britain to improve this diſpoſition in the natives; to cultivate their good-will and attachment, firſt, by inviolable aſſurances of protecting their lives and properties by the freedom of a mild and juſt political conſtitution; ſecondly, by propoſing to their voluntary acceptance, a plan of a temperate and juſt civil government; thirdly, as the French are in general averſe from drinking ſtrong wines, to promiſe them a ſpecial indulgence of importing French wines, in regiſtered

giſtered ſhips, or thoſe of the Eaſt India Company, on expreſs conditions of their paying a certain duty to the crown; fourthly, to obviate all difficulties ariſing from the neceſſary ſtoppage of the paper currency now in circulation †; fifthly, to give freedom to abſent, commonly called runaway ſlaves, who ſhall aſſiſt in the reduction, and who ſhall ſubmit to certain conditions, to remain obligatory on them and their poſterity;—to pay the value of their ſlaves to capitulant owners in the following proportions, viz. two eighths of their appraiſed value, for ſuch as ſhall have been abſent five years, or more; three eighths for abſentees, from three to five years; four eighths for abſentees, from one to two years; five eighths for abſentees, above ſix months to twelve months; and ſix eighths for abſentees, from three to ſix months, antecedent to the inveſtment of the iſland;—to allot diſtricts of interior lands, together with the freedom of cultivation, to theſe freed people and their poſterity ‡, upon condition, that on their parts they

† It is poſſible to do this, by purchaſing, at a medium price or rate of exchange, the paper currency for the laſt eighteen months; by forthwith calling in the whole of the notes, and only receiving ſuch as were in actual circulation before the ſiege; by iſſuing others on the credit of the conquerors in their ſtead.—It will be farther neceſſary, that commiſſaries be appointed by the conquerors and conquered, who ſhall jointly aſcertain the quantity and the value of the paper currency, which, by an article in the capitulation, ſhall lie over till a peace. Nor muſt the conquerors iſſue any more notes than the exact value of thoſe in actual circulation before the ſiege, which ſum ſhall continue in circulation until a treaty of peace ſhall determine the fate of the iſlands: and then both nations muſt ſtipulate to the holders of the notes, the honourable diſcharge of them by payment in gold and ſilver coin, at the current prices thereof, and at the medium eſtimation of paper currency ſtipulated in or at the time of the capitulation.

‡ Theſe freed people ought not to be reſtrained from purchaſing ſlaves for ſervice; but they may purchaſe females, on condition of their marrying only one wife.

ſhall

ſhall be bound within certain limited times after regular notice is conveyed to any of their chiefs, to apprehend and deliver up, all future fugitives, in conſideration alſo, of a proper premium from the owner for each.

It is farther propoſed, that ſuch of the crown ſlaves and properties as ſhall be thought uſeleſs to remain to the public, ſhall be ſold, with a privilege to thoſe who are ſold, to chuſe their maſters, or to endeavour to procure ſuch as they ſhall wiſh to ſerve; that the produce of ſuch ſales be applied to the laſt-mentioned freedoms; that the deficiency ſhall be paid by the Company, and levied by aſſeſſments in five or ſeven years on the inhabitants, the intereſt being rated on the advance at five per cent. per annum. And laſtly, that the code noir remain in force, unleſs altered by the general conſent of the governor, council and delegates of the people.

In this plan for reducing the French iſlands in theſe parts, I have omited to deſcribe towns, harbours, fortifications, bays, inlets, and roads. Theſe you will find particularly deſcribed in the accompanying letter to Governor Haſtings, dated "Town Priſon of Port Lewis, in the Iſle of France the 17th Nov. 1773."

I have hazarded an opinion, that the inhabitants of the French African iſlands might be influenced, by propoſing to their acceptance, a plan of a juſt and temperate government: perhaps you may do me the honour to think the following correſpondent to this deſcription.

That the capitulants ſhall enjoy the privileges and immunities of the natural-born ſubjects of Britain;

Britain; in which will be comprehended the free and uninterrupted exerciſe of their religious ceremonies and faith.—That the parochial churches ſhall be uſed alternately, as is the caſe in ſome parts of Switzerland, for the ſervice of Proteſtants and Roman Catholics; that there ſhall be but one Proteſtant and one Romiſh clergyman to two adjoining pariſhes, and that their ſtipends ſhall be equally aſſeſſed and divided.—That the apoſtolic miſſionaries ſhall be received with all poſſible favour and reſpect, as being, of all the orders in the Romiſh church, the moſt pure in their morals, and moſt diſintereſted and ſincere in their religious zeal.—That inheritances ſhall deſcend according to marriage contracts, and the coutume de Paris.—That new ſubjects, once taking the oaths to alienate their landed properties, by ſale or donation, during the war, nor for the term of five years after the ratification of a definitive treaty, (if the iſlands ſhall then remain to the crown of the conquerors) unleſs in marriage portions to natural-born ſubjects of Britain, or capitulant ſubjects, or by legal deſcent as eſtates of inheritance; but, that they may let lands or houſes on leaſe, with the conſent of the governor and council, upon condition that the leſſor ſhall reſide at leaſt three months in twelve, in ſome part of the Britiſh dominions; that the rent reſerved be no more than three perſons of competent knowledge, one to be named by the governor, ſhall atteſt upon oath; and that the rent ſhall be made payable either in the iſland, or in ſome place under the crown of England; and further, that the parties themſelves ſhall make oath

that

that the peace is not fraudulent, and intended to defeat the conditions of the capitulation, and that there is not any conditional ſale implied.—That the iſlands ſhall be comprehended in the Company's charter, and that they ſhall enjoy ſpecial privileges in them, but that the ſovereignty ſhall be veſted in the crown.—That their produce ſhall be tranſported in the manner already mentioned to Britain, conſigned to the Company, deducting fifteen per cent. from the groſs ſales, in lieu of freight, commiſſion, warehouſe-rent, brokerage, and all other charges, except inſurance and crown duties.—That the Company ſhall furniſh them in return, with ſuch commodities from Britain, as may be neceſſary for carrying on their families, charging, in lieu of all charges and inſurance, ſeventeen and an half per cent.—That upon ſhipping the produce, the Company's treaſurer ſhall furniſh, if required, caſh for a ſtipulated proportion of the whole, for bills drawn by the owners on the agent appointed by the Company in London to negociate theſe matters, and payable in four months after ſight.—That the remainder of the net proceeds ſhall be accounted for, with the account ſales and account current, after ſuch goods as are ordered in return are ſent.—That the planters ſhall be at full liberty to cultivate their reſpective plantations to the beſt poſſible advantage to themſelves, provided that the commodities produced are not contrary to the ſtatute laws of Great Britain, for regulating the commerce and navigation of that nation.

That all the iſlands ſhall be ſubject to one governor general, there being lieutenant governors and

and diſtinct councils in each. That one third part in number of each council, may conſtitutionally be capitulant ſubjects, profeſſing the Roman Catholic faith.—That theſe ſeveral governments ſhall have diſtinct powers to enact laws and ordinances, for the good government and internal police of the iſlands reſpectively, with the conſent of the governor general; and that ſuch laws ſhall have force ſo long as they ſhall not be diſallowed by the ſupreme council of India, or the Court of Directors, in all matters relating to trade; or by the crown, in matters concerning the fundamental rights of perſons and of property.—That when public taxes are wanted, each diviſion, or pariſh, ſhall nominate two delegates to repreſent them in a general aſſembly, who ſhall meet twice every year in the metropolis of each iſland, to aſſeſs ſuch taxes upon the people, as ſhall be thought neceſſary and adequate, by and with the conſent of the council and governor general.—That each pariſh ſhall have veſtries, to take cognizance of leſſer affairs, with power to aſſeſs ſuch ways and means as the reſpective circumſtances of each, and its immediate police, may require from time to time, ſubject to the reviſion of the governor and council.

That free merchants, under ſpecial covenants, be encouraged: But that hawkers, pedlars, and foreign itinerants †, be totally diſcountenanced,

† By itinerants, is meant, a ſet of French and Swiſs vagrants, carrying paccodils, which they vend in the country; ſuch as infeſted the ceded iſlands in the Weſt Indies, during the laſt peace, very much to the diſcouragement of fair trade and the manufactures of Britain, and againſt the ſecurity of the iſlands.

as ruinous to the people in general, corruptors of ſlaves, and dangerous to the ſecurity of the iſlands.

Thus have I reduced and ſettled, under Britiſh government, the French African iſlands; a meaſure which was eſſentially neceſſary to the permanency of the Britiſh ſettlements, and the general tranquillity of Hindoſtan. I am, &c.

LETTER XLII.

To J—— M——, Eſq. London.

Calcutta, November 5, 1779.

THE numerous iſlands known by the name of Niccabar, run from north to ſouth abreaſt of the weſt entrance of the ſtraits of Malacca. The moſt ſoutherly of theſe is nearly oppoſite to Achen Head, on the iſland of Sumatra, which, in a ſerene morning or evening, is within its view, and lies in about the five one-half degree of N. latitude. The moſt northerly is ſituated N. lat. 10 degrees.

The ſouthern Niccabar iſlands are the leaſt valuable, and have not yet been claimed by any European power; but the Danes pretend to have a right to the moſt northern of theſe iſlands, called the Car-Niccabars, and have had miſſionaries upon them for ſeveral years, but without attempting to make any eſtabliſhment, or to derive from them any commercial advantage. Mr. Bolts, in the courſe of the current year, has taken poſſeſſion of the largeſt and beſt of theſe iſlands, and exalted the Imperial flag in the name of

of the Emperor of Germany. But the Daniſh government of Tranquebar, on the coaſt of Coromandel, have proteſted againſt that uſurpation, and a correſpondence thereon has been carried on between them and Mr. Bolts.

In this iſland there is a commodious port for the entertainment of ſhips in all ſeaſons, and there are ſeveral other excellent and ſafe bays, where whole fleets may anchor. The moſt ſoutherly of all theſe iſlands, has a large bay, where the Pintade lay in twenty fathom water, at the diſtance of half a league from the ſhore. Upon ſounding, we found, that on a clear ſandy bottom, a ſhip could ride within a cable's length of the beach in ſeven fathom water. We entered this bay through the weſt channel, called St. George's channel, between the large iſland and a leſſer one to the northward. In this entrance there is a ſmall iſland which ſecures the bay, along which a ſhip may paſs, within a piſtol ſhot, in twenty fathom water. There is another ſmall iſland in the eaſtern channel, through which ſhips go out. The large bay, or rather the capacious baſon, which lies within theſe iſlands, is divided into three ſeveral bays, each of which affords a ſafe and commodious retreat for veſſels. Our ſhip was piloted by the natives into the centre bay. The greateſt difficulty we encountered in this place, was the want of water. The inhabitants, however, ſhewed us two very ſmall ſtreams, iſſuing from ſprings at the foot of two hills; at the ſame time telling us, that there were ſeveral fine rivulets in the iſland, in the

bays

bays to the ſouthward, and in the bay next to that in which we lay.

The centre of the iſland, and the ſouth eaſt and ſouth ſides, we were told, were well inhabited. This iſland produces plantains, a ſpecies of wild yams, cocoa-nuts, beetle-nuts, beetle-leaves, mangoes, lemons, limes, &c. The people raiſe poultry and hogs in great abundance. They gave me ſome very fine canes, of an appearance and taſte which indicated qualities very proper for making good ſugar. They ſold a pettiaugre† load of cocoa-nuts, beetle-nuts, and beetle-leaves, for about a fathom of coarſe blue linen, of the value of ten pence or twelve pence. The domeſtic dunghill fowls are ſmall, but ſufficiently cheap, for we purchaſed them for about the value of three farthings in linen, for a piece of an old iron hoop, or a large nail. Tobacco, pieces of old iron, knives, ſciſſars, or gimblets, would have purchaſed any thing they poſſeſſed. For ambergris, for wild pigeons, for wood, for labour, &c. &c. they take in barter, linen, red and blue ſtriped cheques, and coloured handkerchiefs.

There is a kind of pigeon on this iſland, which I never ſaw in any other country. It is of a deep blue colour, and has the feet, claws, and walk of a parrot. Its head, neck, body, and tail, are thoſe of a pigeon. I conceive this bird to be a mongrel breed of the wild pigeon and the parrot. Theſe iſlands abound with birds of the moſt variegated and beautiful plumage. I was particularly ſtruck with a moſt elegant ſpecies of the long tailed paroquet, which is there very com-

† A ſpecies of water-carriage.

mon.

mon. The coaſts abound with fiſhes of various kinds, which the natives either kill with lances, or catch with hooks made of bones and ſhells. The bays in theſe parts are covered to amazing depths with ſhells; and as in ſome places the reflux of the ſea leaves great ſpaces, at regular intervals, open and dry; and as the iſlands all around the coaſts are covered with wood, all India might be ſupplied thence with ſhell lime at a very eaſy price. Good building timber, and even the hardeſt teak-wood, may be procured there on very moderate terms. And from the wood of the lances, and the paddles of the boats, which I carefully examined, I do not in the leaſt heſitate to conclude, that the Niccabar iſlands contain certain ſpecies of wood of a very hard texture, capable of receiving a high poliſh, and very proper for houſehold furniture.

The harbours and bays of the Niccabar iſlands command, at all times, the bay of Bengal and the ſtraights of Malacca; and are well adapted to afford to the navigation into thoſe ſeas, protection againſt tempeſtuous ſeaſons, and thoſe unavoidable accidents to which it is expoſed by contrary winds, calms, currents, and other caſualties.

The canoes or boats of the inhabitants of the Niccabar iſlands, are from fifteen to forty feet long; from eighteen to forty eight inches in width; and from about eighteen inches to three feet deep. Their conſtruction is uniform, both ſides being perfectly alike in every reſpect. Their form is calculated for going faſt, with wonderful ſkill and exactneſs: and though it

would be extravagant to affirm, that the Niccabarians are acquainted at all with mathematics, yet are their ſmall veſſels conſtructed for faſt ſailing agreeably to mathematical principles. Theſe veſſels draw to a ſharp point at each end, inclining upwards from the centre. Their prows are from three to five feet in height, proportioned to the dimenſions of the boats, highly poliſhed or carved, with a curve at the upper end. Both the inſides and outſides of theſe boats are as ſmooth as glaſs, except towards the outſide gunnel, which, by way of ornament, is ſometimes cut length-wiſe, into grooves.

It was for ſome time a matter of wonder to me, how the barbarians of the Niccabar Iſlands, with ſo very imperfect inſtruments as edged ſtones, and pieces of hoops or old iron ſpikes, could excavate ſo large trees, and form them into neat canoes. But I afterwards diſcovered, that not only the more rugged and laborious part of the work, but alſo the poliſh, is effected chiefly by a dextrous application of the power of fire; a method which is alſo uſed by the Caribbs of America, but leſs elegantly, in hollowing their canoes and pettiaugres. They uſe not either iron or wooden nails in any carpenter's work; all junctures are performed by twigs, or ligaments made of the bark of trees. Their cargoes are lodged within the boat; and the whole veſſel is overlaid with pieces of timber acroſs, about two inches in diameter, at the diſtance of about four or five inches aſunder, which are tied dextrouſly to the gunnel; except at certain ſpaces, where they are left looſe for the purpoſe

poſe of getting at what is in the hold. Upon this platform ſit the paddlers, ſteerſmen, and paſſengers; here alſo they ſtow their more bulky goods: our ſhip's water caſks were carried on ſhore, and brought on board in this manner. From one ſide of the boat, a machine is rigged out to a conſiderable diſtance, and lodged upon the water, as a balance. It is a ſimple contrivance, and while it keeps the boat perfectly ſteady, does not greatly impede the ſailing. But if it ſhould happen to break, looſe, or any how to give way, the boat muſt inevitably overſet. As the length and weight of the out-rigger, though formed of a light buoyant wood, renders any care in trimming the boat needleſs, people move and walk in it with as much freedom as they would on a ſhip's deck.

The inhabitants of theſe iſlands are evidently of Malayan extraction, having the ſame features and the ſame complexions. I never beheld better formed men. They are remarkably ſquare, muſcular, and full cheſted. Their limbs are proportioned like thoſe of a Grecian or Roman ſtatue, only that they are ſomewhat more muſcular in the calves of the legs. Their ſtature runs generally from five feet ſix to five feet nine inches. But with all this appearance of ſtrength and activity, they practiſe neither, and do not ſeem to know that they poſſeſs them. In their deportment they are the moſt ſerious and ſolemn people that I know in the world. They very ſeldom ſmile, but conſtantly preſerve in their countenance a grave ſerenity. Although in their traffic they have often been defrauded by Europeans,

as I was convinced by ſome of their actions and inſinuations, yet they do not indicate a ſuſpicious diſpoſition; and they ſeem naturally inclined to honeſty in their dealings. Beſides their native tongue, they ſpeak a kind of lingua França, which is a mixture of the Portugueſe and Malayan languages. I could never diſcover the nature of their religion; but I ſuppoſe it is the ſame with that of the natives of Sumatra, a ſpecies of Paganiſm. They appear to be a deliberate, cool, ſenſible people, and as far as I had an opportunity of obſerving, they are punctual in the performance of their engagements.

An accident happened while we were among them, which diſplayed at once their honeſty and their humanity. My reverend companion, Mr. Y—e, and the ſurgeon of the frigate, went on ſhore with two of the ſhip's muſkets to ſhoot birds. As they were coming off in the evening in one of the country boats (for the Pintade had no boat) in which were a few water caſks filled and laſhed upon the platform, and when they were at the diſtance of about half a mile from both the ſhip and the ſhore, the ſurgeon inconſiderately leaping upon one of the water caſks, either looſed or overpoiſed the balance, and inſtantly the boat over-ſet. Paddlers and paſſengers were immediately afloat in about fifteen fathom water. I happened at that very moment to be looking at the boat, and perceived the people ſwimming, among whom I could clearly diſtinguiſh my honeſt friend Mr. Y—e. We were all in the utmoſt diſtreſs, for we had not a boat to ſend to their relief: but in an inſtant we diſcovered

vered ſeveral canoes, rowing from ſhore, with unuſual ſpeed towards the ſwimmers. They took Mr. Y—e and the ſurgeon into one of them, and quickly brought them on board the Pintade, without either demanding or ſeeming to expect any reward for their trouble. They appeared happy at what they had done, and in the benevolent act itſelf, to enjoy an ample recompence for their humanity. The water caſks were alſo brought on board. They were told, that by the overſetting of the boat two muſkets were loſt, and the ſurgeon's ſhoes and ſilver buckles. The next morning a boat came along ſide, with the two muſkets, ſhoes, and buckles, although they had often before ſolicited, and offered any thing in their poſſeſſion, for a muſket, in vain. Theſe innocent people might have kept the articles they found, without even creating a ſuſpicion of their being in their poſſeſſion; yet they returned them, and were ſo honourable in this matter, that they refuſed to accept any compenſation, other than the entertainment they received in the Pintade, for their trouble.

The women of theſe iſlands ſometimes row in the boat as well as the men: But the men appeared to be of jealous diſpoſitions, for they ſeldom allowed them to come into the ſhip; and when they did allow them, it was with reluctance, and in conſequence of the importunity of female curioſity. It was alſo owing to the paſſion of jealouſy, I ſuppoſe, that the women were very ſeldom viſible on ſhore. I was ſurpriſed to find, among the inhabitants of theſe iſlands, ſo many ruptured

ruptured perſons. I was unable to form any conjecture concerning this matter. There were ſeveral of them who had ſcorbutic ſymptoms on their ſkins: this I aſcribed to the quantities of fiſh they eat, and watry yams. I could never diſcover the cauſe, why they erect their houſes or huts upon poſts, raiſed ſeveral feet above the ſurface of the earth, to which they mount with ladders which are removeable at pleaſure, and which, I ſuppoſe, they lodge with the family within the houſe at night. I have not learned that there are in the Niccabar iſlands, any ferocious animals which might render this precaution neceſſary.—Thus we find in the Niccabar iſlands, the origin of columns, and their ſimpleſt form, which the progreſs of taſte and of art has improved into the moſt beautiful ornament within the compaſs of architecture.

I have often wondered that our Eaſt India Company never turned their attention to theſe iſlands, the poſſeſſion of which would, in ſo many reſpects, contribute to the ſecurity and advantage of their trade and navigation in thoſe regions and ſeas. This neglect, however, will not appear aſtoniſhing, when we conſider the ſcandalous inattention of the Company's ſervants to objects of ſtill greater moment.

I have not been at the Andaman iſlands, which lie higher up in the gulph, and nearly oppoſite to Pegu and the weſt of Siam. The inhabitants of theſe fertile iſlands, are repreſented by Europeans in India, as ſavage, fierce, and not to be approached without danger. But I have been well informed, that the Andamanians are not naturally

turally ferocious: but, having been barbarouſly uſed by Europeans, as well as defrauded, they regard them as their enemies, and whenever they ſee them, they fly from their approach; and if purſued, they reſiſt. The moſt outrageous violence having been repeatedly committed by Europeans on the men of Andaman, and alſo on their families, it is not any wonder that they have loſt all confidence in the perpetrators of the greateſt enormities.

This people are of a black complexion, and have woolly hair. They are ſaid to have deſcended from ſome Caffres or negroes who were brought as ſlaves from the Caffrayan coaſt of Africa; but who, either by chance, or vigorous exertion, emancipated themſelves on theſe iſlands. If, by ſome mild method, the prejudices againſt Europeans were removed from the minds of the inhabitants, the Andaman iſlands might be made commodious places of refreſhment upon preſſing occaſions, and might perhaps furniſh ſome articles of trade.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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